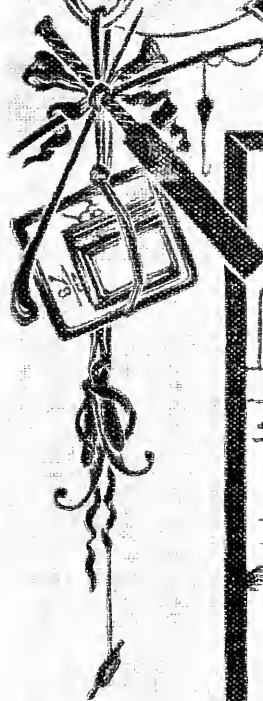


OLD SCHOOL DAYS



By
ANDREW JAMES MILLER

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A MEMOIR OF BOYHOOD, FROM EARLIEST
YOUTH TO MANHOOD, INCLUDING
THE ERA OF THE REBELLION

A COMPLETE STORY OF BOY LIFE, AIR-CASTLES, DAY-DREAMS
AND ROMANCE, VACATIONS, SPORTS AND RECREATIONS,
SUPERSTITIONS, TERRORS AND GRIEFS, ANNIVER-
SARIES, ERAS AND HOLIDAYS, LYRICS OF
THE REBELLION AND ITS BOYS
ARTS AND CRAFTS OF BOYHOOD, PRACTICAL JOKES AND
DANGEROUS PRANKS, TRAGEDIES IN THE LIFE OF
BOYHOOD, THE OLD HOME AND ITS MEMORIES,
A COMPREHENSIVE RETROSPECTION.
APPENDIX: OLD FIELD SCHOOLS

BY

ANDREW JAMES MILLER

THE

PUBLISHERS

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TO THE

FRIENDS, PLAYMATES AND SCHOOLMATES,

WHO SHARED, WITH ME, ALL THE GLORIES AND MISERIES, PERILS
AND TORGIVERSATIONS OF THE "SALAD DAYS" OF YOUTH,

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.



ANDREW JAMES MILLER.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

Mr. Andrew James Miller, the author of this book, was born of Scotch-Irish parents at LaGrange Ga., Sept. 4, 1855. His paternal ancestors were from Ballycullen, near Belfast, Ireland, where the estate is still in the possession of the eldest male descendant, having thus passed in succession, from sire to son, for the past 425 years. His maternal ancestors were from Annbank-by-Tarbolton, near Ayr, Scotland, where several immediate relatives still reside. Mr. Miller passed the usual course of studies at the academy of his native town; then to preparatory school and finally was sent to the State University at Athens, Ga. Through inability to continue his studies to the point of graduation, he was reluctantly compelled to withdraw, and, at the age of nineteen, entered business life with the Mercantile Agency of R. G. Dun & Co., Atlanta, Ga. He rose rapidly in his new profession and, after a year, was sent to Quincy, Ill., and was subsequently made travelling auditor for the Memphis branch. In 1879, he was made manager at Evansville, Ind., and in 1883, was promoted to the large branch at Minneapolis, Minn., controlling an immense territory of the Northwest. In the meantime, he was married to Miss Ella Stephens, the granddaughter of Gen. Robt. M. Evans, after whom the city of Evansville, Ind., was named. The rigors of the severe winters of the Northwest impaired his health and he returned to Evansville, and entered journalism as editor of the "Evening Tribune." During all of this time, he had, at leisure moments, pursued his studies, which had been especially directed to the ancient civilizations of America, and the comparatively unexplored regions of Central and South America. He conceived the idea of organizing a Scientific Exploring expedition to America's Dark Continent and, in 1888, he interested several of the leading

Biographical Note.

newspapers in the United States, in the scheme. Among these were the New York "Sun," Louisville "Courier-Journal," Chicago "News" and St. Louis "Republic." In March, 1888, the expedition, equipped with every necessary appliance, sailed from New Orleans and landed at Puerto Cortez. From thence, all of the five republics of Central America were visited, including the extensive ruins of Chiquimula, Quirigua and Cerro Cruz del Quiche, in Guatemala; Copan in Honduras and the numerous ruins of the lake and surrounding Nicaraguan country. A new and hitherto unknown ruined city was discovered in Olancho, and another in the wild and unexplored region of Northern Nicaragua. The details of these explorations were published by the newspaper syndicate, together with numerous facts as to the strange people of those sections, and created widespread interest throughout the country. A second expedition was formed by Mr. Miller, when he visited Ecuador, Peru and Chili, Argentine, Brazil and Venezuela, as well as the islands of Curacao, Trinidad, Martinique and Cuba. Most of the details of this journey are yet to be incorporated in a comprehensive work upon Latin America, which is now being carefully compiled by the author. The facts and general details of "Old School Days" are the result of the author's careful collection and preservation of data, from the earliest period of boy life, and the extended comparisons of his facts and those of different divisions of the country. To still further enrich these memoirs, he devoted six weeks of the past summer in revisiting the scenes of his early boyhood and revising his notes among those who shared with him the "ups and downs" of Old School Days. At present, the author is the Manager of the Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co., Montgomery, Ala.

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Preface.

THE thoughts and aims of days long past are the forces that mould our present lives, and it is, therefore, impossible to forget them. The ghosts of old sorrows and of aspirations unfulfilled cannot be wholly laid. The road we have travelled cannot be obliterated by time. We cannot help seeing much of the track still, and if a part of it lay between green pastures and still waters; through woods, gladdened by the song of birds, and over hills bright with sunshine and fragrant with violets, another, and, perhaps, a longer part of the journey, was through deserts and quagmires, and across jagged rocks, over which we stumbled with bleeding feet.

The peculiarly difficult task of truthfully delineating the capricious, variable and almost unfathomable nature of the average schoolboy, has created a barrier to this intricate and interesting study, which has made it a field of research dangerous to even the most skillful specialist. This may be said to arise from the inevitable results of evolution in school life, studies, methods and discipline: the variations in national life, and the differences in eras of progressive thought.

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And it will be forcibly illustrated by comparing the life and times, so charmingly depicted in "Tom Brown's School Days at Rugby," and the most recent work upon boy life, brought out by Rudyard Kipling, in "Stalky & Co." There is the widest divergence in the types of boyhood in the two periods, requiring a strenuous effort of mind to comprehend the fact that both authors are depicting the boyhood of the same nation. The reasons are plain, when we reflect upon the fact that the status and surroundings of the school days of Tom Brown have long passed away, while the modern Eton boy is the product of another and different era.

It has seemed equally difficult for many historians of boyhood to maintain a strict fidelity to fact, by overdoing the effort to create a natural schoolboy. Such is the impression of Dean Farrar's "Eric," which is an admirable literary compilation, while his attempt to depict a real schoolboy as a namby-pamby sentimentalist, is more of a caricature and burlesque than a fact. Possibly one of the nearest approaches ever made to a real boy, in fiction, is the creation of "Tom Sawyer," by Mark Twain. The escapades of this precocious youth, with his admixture of good and bad traits, and the absence of any preternatural intellect and cleverness, make him a wholesome study, as one of the actual boys of real flesh and blood quality.

Yet the task of compiling a true record of old school days and boy life is, by no means, an easy one. It has many serious impediments, beyond all

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errors of memory, involuntary prejudices, and unintentional embellishments of particular epochs, in the eventful life of childhood.

There are some things, which, it is generally understood should be respectfully treated, however unworthy of respect they may have been. Foremost among these is one's old school, especially the one which encompasses the first years of school life. We may have been bullied and starved there; we may have experienced there some of the most poignant griefs and sufferings of early life, but there seems to be something, which proclaims it bad form to confess it. To say a word against the place where we have perhaps passed the most miserable years of our existence, is held to be something of a breach of confidence. Such a chasm of years has intervened that the indictments, which could now be brought, are long barred by "the statute of limitations." Who would now reveal its shortcomings is considered a croaker and misanthrope, whose charges would not be accepted with full credulity. It is only permitted for aged persons, in their occasional confidences and biographies, to narrate their most secret educational experiences; these old, unhappy, far-off things which seem to belong to another world, except to those who remember them.

The author is in no wise blind to his faults and imperfections. No literary merit is claimed for this work, as he is painfully aware of its many deficiencies, both in diction and purity, while it can be justly

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charged, in many places, to have ruthlessly violated literary taste, in the use of slang phrases and expressions.

The only merit claimed is for an honest and energetic compilation of facts, comprehending a multitude of episodes, anecdotes and everyday happenings of the period of boyhood under consideration.

Furthermore, no attempt is made to conceal the fact that a large number of these details, and, at times, the language used, has been borrowed from others. Not only a multitude of authorities, upon school life, and other transient works of ante-bellum days, but a number of miscellaneous clippings, from sources unknown to the author, have materially contributed to this compilation. Indeed, the sources are so numerous, from which he has gathered the details, that no attempt will be made to enumerate them. Facts and incidents have been culled from every quarter, and the most suitable things that could enhance these memoirs and add to their general interest, have been freely appropriated. This would have been largely defeated, if page after page had been thickly studded with quotations. Some quotations and allusions have been made, where they could best serve the force and interest of the theme, but a ragged regiment of such authorities, which check the flow of discourse with interruption, have been studiously avoided.

As a means of awakening the genial after-dinner humor of most men past middle age, no subject per-

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haps equals the memory of early school days. Let the topic be started, by an anecdote of some long-dead pedagogue, it will be as if the spigot had been drawn from a butt of old vintage, and the stream of recollection will flow forth, rich and sparkling, with the mellowed light of years. Strange is the charm of a word! For a lifetime a man has been painfully toiling up the Alps of circumstance—it may be that he has gained the object of his desire—the glittering ice crystal on the peak, which long ago dazzled his upward-looking eyes; and now, “amid the walnuts and wine,” some one says “I remember”—and lo! the years are forgotten; the grey-beard is back in the sunny valley of his boyhood; wandering the field paths with chubby companions, long since dust, and filling his heart once more with the sweet scent of clover fields and hayricks. Again, he is romping over the highways and through the meadows, resuming acquaintance with all the lore of the fields and hedges, drinking deep at those nature-fountains whence all the literatures and poetries of the world have sprung. Again he hears the music of the night-bird's song, or the rustle of a dress in the dear old rose garden, and timid hands, lingering in each other's clasp, as low, sweet words are whispered in the softening twilight, while high above hangs bright Hesperus like a lamp from Heaven.

But, aside from the sentimental retrospection of old school days, we are frequently treated to dissertations by those men of mature years, who would disparage

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the old educational systems and sublimate the new. They will say how comparatively easy the road to learning is made in the latter days, and how much fewer boyish tears water the road than in their time. This, in the main, is true. Probably the boys are better "housed" and have better food than was formerly the case; punishments are not nearly so severe; the cruelties inflicted by bullies—though they still occur—are no longer winked at by the authorities, while athletics form almost as great a part of the education of youth as their books. Boys of the present speak of the school time, as a rule, with pleasure; and though there are reasons why their word, upon such matters, is not to be trusted, it is certain that when the holidays are over they exhibit less reluctance in returning to their studies. On the other hand, life, at the period of adolescence, has become less enjoyable because more serious. It is now necessary to face the future at a much earlier age than formerly, and the struggle for existence begins before manhood is reached. At the time of life which was formerly free from care, when school was over and the work of the world still at a distance, competition now begins. The back is suited to the burden in time, but the shoulders of youth should not be made to stoop under it.

I might go deeper into the argument of this question, but it is wholly outside of the purpose of this volume to engage in any controversy with the merits or demerits of old-time educational systems. The

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sole intent and purpose of these memoirs is to give a true and authentic account of old school days, with all the arts and crafts of boyhood, comprehending the period from the time of mastering the alphabet until books are thrown aside to enter upon the sterner battle of life. A faithful portrayal of this youthful period cannot fail to always awaken interest, even with the innumerable shortcomings of any one who may undertake such a task. Callous indeed must be the heart which has preserved no cherished imprint of that glorious period, before genuine sorrow and care ever came into existence.

It is true I have heard wiseacres complain that they have had to learn experience; and, I suppose that just as Minerva sprang, a goddess nobly armed, from the brain of Jupiter, so they would fain have come into the world with the thews and muscles of their minds and bodies fully grown. Happily, God knows better, and blest us with youth. Why, to lose the freshness, buoyancy, simplicity, trustfulness, irrepressible ardor, hopefulness and unrestrained enjoyment of youth, would be to lose almost everything that sweetens the cup of life. Indeed, one must feel grieved when he sees children without their childhood—little men and little women who were not permitted to know the bliss that belongs to their morning hours. With what pangs of regret will they say to themselves by and by, "Alas, I never was young." 'Tis a sin against their future to deprive them of a past. To them, the bright air-castles and glorious

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day-dreams of childhood are unknown. They know nothing of that region in which the boyish dreamer roams at will. The golden trees, tottering with their jewelled fruitage, in Aladdin's cave; pirate vessels, flying their terrible black flag and death's head; knights in full armor, careening around the lists; Jack, the Giant Killer, dealing tremendous blows against his colossal adversary; fairies, in mazy dances, whirling before the rosebud thrones of Oberon and Titania; Don Quixote, tilting at the windmill; Robin Hood and his merry men, in Lincoln Green, hunting in Sherwood forest; Robinson Crusoe staring at the footprint on his island's sandy shore—all these mingled together, along with shadowy forests, palaces and grottoes, in the happy hunting-grounds of a boy's dreams and reminiscences.

As he grows up a change takes place in the phantasmagoria; new lights and shades pass athwart the mirror; new combinations are evolved from memory and imagination. Perhaps the soft, sweet light of love folds over the exquisite scene. Perhaps some impulse of ambition colors the thought and shapes the vision. It matters not, for though the happy hunting-ground—Tom Tiddler's Land—whatsoever aspect it assumes, will still supply that refuge from the laborious and irksome activities of life, in which our spirits stand in need, and is never so bright, so true, so real, as in the imaginative, credulous days of youth.

The closing chapters of this book, under the head of "Old Field Schools," are taken from a little work

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of the late Col. Richard Malcolm Johnston, whose memoirs were issued under the auspices of the National Bureau of Education, during the past year. The excerpts incorporated herein are by his personal permission, and will be found especially interesting, by way of comparison of the boyhood of sixty or seventy years ago, with that of a much later period. His pen pictures of early educational life in Georgia are unexcelled in their faithful portrayal of the classes and conditions of the long ago, in the rural districts of the State. The details include graphic descriptions of the ancient pedagogues and their many migrations; the old log school houses, with their quaint furnishings; the old-time schoolroom, with its sturdy discipline; the habits, manners, customs, dress and diversions of the period, as well as the multifold sports and recreations which characterized that remote period of our social and national life.

In conclusion, these memoirs are submitted especially to those who can appreciate their spirit, enjoy the memories they revive, and overlook the imperfections and shortcomings of the compilation.

ANDREW JAMES MILLER,

MONTGOMERY, ALA.,

January, 1900.

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CHAPTER I.

Earliest Days of Child Life.

IN Wordsworth's famous "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," he says, in substance, that our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting, that we are less and less alive to the glory and dream of external nature, as infancy recedes. The poet did not mean that this vision was realized from the nurse's arms, but in childhood, which we distinguish from infancy—that period of which Ruskin says, "There never was a child of any promise but awaked to the sense of beauty with the first gleam of reason." Childhood is something which lies within our recollection. What there may have been in our minds before that time, we know nothing of; but as the period of childhood recedes, it is true that we are less and less able to perceive that visionary dream of external nature. Wordsworth himself protested that he was not inculcating a belief, when he said that "heaven is what lies about us in infancy," or, as another has expressed

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it: "True happiness is only given to children and angels." No matter what it may be or whence it may derive, there is, in childhood, some perception of beauty and divinity, in the outlook of the world, which would make most of us poets if it lasted, and does make a poet where it lingers and can find a voice. They never yet had voice, these glorious dreams and visions, cast upon the childish mind, from external nature. They come and go before speech is employed in description or analysis, and are probably unattainable to either. Richard Jeffries recalls how, as a small boy, he used to go out on the hills and lie under the trees, and how he was overcome by "an emotion of the soul beyond all definition." In one of his poems he tried his utmost to give some account of these emotions as they entered into the story of his boyish heart. He would recapture

*"Those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day."*

Filled with a sense of what they were to him he could not give proper words to what he remembers of the fading splendors. He struggled vainly to recover the irrecoverable and to express the inexpressible.

Until a child reaches the age of five years its history is largely confined to the nursery. The study of its infantile discontent and content, misery and gladness, up to that period, belongs almost exclusively

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to the kindergarten and home circle, which should not be invaded by the casual biographer of child life. It is nevertheless true that many children develop most precocious traits long before reaching five years, but these are the exceptions with which we are not dealing. It is, no doubt, also true that many doting fathers and mothers have discovered wonders in their little ones, even before they could articulate. No one can deny how interesting and fascinating, for instance, is the tiny child of two years when words are being prettily put together, when its pronouns and verbs constitute effective sentences, full of weighty import to the speaker; when little actions and big determinations are so charming and full of artless beauty. But this beauty lies largely in the fact that the child, up to this age, has been trained and made obedient to the gentle, certain will of a tender mother. It is, in fact, almost too late, after two years, to begin to educate and to train the will and temper of a child, as it knows, by this age, with whom it has to deal, and acts accordingly. Just as a beautiful child of two years is one of the most charming objects in all God's creation, if it has been well trained, also an ill-trained child is oftentimes one of the most unpleasant. To their parents even these children are not ugly, for too frequently they reflect themselves; but to all others, the ill-tempered, obstinate little one is a sad sight. What is generally termed a "sweet" child is indeed one of the sweetest things in life. There is a witchery in the tiny lips and tender, soft

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round arms, and in the sparkling, laughing eyes and ruddy, rounded cheeks. Surely, "'tis not good that children should know any wickedness." But those little eyes see quickly, and those little ears hear all we think they heed not. We thus teach them wickedness and show them temper, and then wonder there should be so many unruly children. How quickly children learn who is just, firm and exact with them, and how they pour out their love upon those who act thus, rather than upon the over-indulgent and irrational weak ones, who pet and caress and then are compelled to punish.

From two to five years the temper and affections develop quicker than the reasoning powers; but constant firmness will subdue and regulate the most passionate child without resort to corporal punishment. It is at this age that a child's training for after life most seriously begins; not in book-learning, but in little actions of utility; little household matters and offices that teach a child that it can be of use in the world. Proudly will a little one of four or five talk of "my work" if it be given some trivial task that its tender years can manage—some little help to mother or nurse or servants, done well and carefully.

But it is from the age of five that the seriousness of life begins with a child. Lessons (don't call them tasks) have to be learned and work performed. Now this very seriousness can be made and should be made the joyousness of an occupied life; each characteristic of a child should be developed and not

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be crushed. Well has Goethe put it when he sees in "self-will" future firmness and resolution; and yet how many parents and teachers try to crush out self-will as an evil thing, instead of directing it into self-reliance, firmness and resolution. Temper, too, is crushed, whereas, properly guided, it may mean immense power of purpose; unguided, it does mean awful misery and untold griefs. Lessons, to most children, are a pleasure; it is the teaching and the school that are irksome and sometimes hateful. All children are proud of knowledge and will not mind the trouble, if they but see the end and aim of their troubles.

The author can dimly recall this early period of childhood and, in this instance, as with many other epochs of child life, to be treated in this work, he will give the impressions produced upon himself as not unlike those of any child of a similar age. The idea of mastering the alphabet and marching into the orthographic beginning of Webster's Elementary Spelling Book, was a fond desire, and those mysterious hieroglyphics furnished a strange fascination to the juvenile mind, until they were finally learned. But we can recall the hurry—even impatience—which was manifested by the teacher to push us beyond this primary stage. This impatience was somewhat terrifying to our young minds and almost at the outset inculcated an aversion to the thralldom of the school-room and led to many outbursts of tears. And while these brief spasms of grief were keen and poignant,

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they were easily hushed by gentle words and friendly advances.

Still the aversion to the schoolroom was not overcome during the long period which carried us clear over "baker" and through "daffodil." It was long after we had begun to read "She fed the old hen" and "The boy had a drum" that a fortuitous circumstance granted us an unexpected vacation—by the measles breaking out in school. This equivocal calamity was a most welcome visitor, and it is easy to recall the universal joy it occasioned. Those who caught the measles were not to be pitied (for it was not dangerous like smallpox, and was better than lessons), and those who didn't were taken away for fear of infection. In subsequent years we learned, too, what an inestimable privilege it was to have the mumps, as it furnished an immediate holiday. I knew a boy to whom this happy fortune happened twice, and once more with the whooping-cough, but it exhausted his luck and eventually he became an art critic. A short time since a providential interposition of this kind happened to a school in Troy, N. Y., taking the shape of a plague of fleas. There were "millions of them" we are told, in every department, and the hours of the night were passed, as in seaside lodging houses:

*"Three in itching, three in scratching,
Two in hunting, none in catching."*

The day boys took them home in their clothes, sul-

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phur was burnt, carbolic acid was sprinkled, but nothing came of it but smells. As a certain writer observed, they seemed only to "rouse the fleas' ambition." The school was broken up, and the joyous children went home. Why should these boys of the present be thus favored? The poor boy of the long ago never got emancipated by insects. He might have been sent home occasionally with a "flea in his ear," but that was not emancipation—it was disgrace.

How early a little child's thinking and reasoning powers are made use of by itself was aptly illustrated to me the day following the death of the old emperor of Germany. A small tot of six years asked: "And now he's gone to Heaven, isn't he, mamma? And will he see baby up there? And will he talk German or English? And will he know baby?" And then, suddenly, after some words of explanation, "And will baby understand him?" Such thinking and reasoning powers can be developed delicately and gently, even in children thus young; but in most of our schools they are immediately crushed by the child's being set to learn a lesson from some not-to-be-remembered-primer. At six and seven such lessons are set for it; and seeing no use, no outcome, to its own mind from its work, the child soon hates learning with such restraints thrown about it. With rational teaching of homely subjects; pleasant history, illustrated by striking tales; interesting geography, with pictures, or better still, with photographs of the country and especial reference to the country near home; with

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such teaching, showing the child the pleasantness of knowledge, a boy of nine may, without any real or unpleasant labor, be equal to the lad of thirteen, who has been stuffed with grammar and parrot-said lessons; and his mind will be developed so that he will understand what he is doing. But such teaching requires more individual teaching than can be given in large schools, as well as careful assistance and gentle aid from parents. Goethe has said, "Did the children grow up, as in their childhood they gave promise, we should have more geniuses," and he explains why this occurs; but one great reason is, that individuality is crushed out of children, both in home life and school life, and an effort is made to press all into the same mould, to form them after the same pattern, that they may pass the same examination.

There were many marked differences in the schools of town and country thirty or forty years ago, just as there are to-day. School life in town, notwithstanding its more sophisticated surroundings, has also its memories; for in what circumstance will not the boyish mind create a charmed world of its own? Apart from the actual events of classroom and playground, the streets and shop windows and things in them to be desired, all furnish objects of absorbing interest; and a half-amused envy in later years attends the memory of the fearful joy with which, after much contriving of ways and means, and much final screwing-up of courage to face the shopman, the long-coveted pack of fire-crackers or the more wonderful

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and expensive percussion pistol, was acquired and smuggled home.

But school life in the city has a certain precocity, which somewhat detracts from the poetry of remembrance; an aroma is lacking which forms the subtlest charm of the associations of rustic childhood. What has the city child to compare to the memory of those hot summer afternoons when, escaped from the irksome thrall of desk and birch rod, in the clear creek pool in some secluded spot, the urchins of the neighborhood learned to swim? Such a scene is generally among our earliest memories, as it remains in a man's mind—a possession—a joy forever. Far off, in some city den, gas lit and begrimed, his eyes may grow dim poring over ledgers that are not his own and his heart grow weary and sick with hope deferred; but, at a word, a suggestion, it will all come back; he will be standing again on that grassy margin, the joyous voices of his youthful comrades will be ringing in his ears, while the sunshine once more beats warmly on his head and at his feet sparkle, over their sandy bottom, the pellucid waters of the woodland pool. It is not for nothing that rustic children, as they start for school, hear the low of the cows and witness the early gamboling of the sheep and goats; and that day after day, as they tread the long stretches of moorland or hedges, they see the quail whirr off to the hills, and the fish dart away from the sunny shallows; and it is not for nothing that they spend long truant afternoons in the ferny lanes and woodlands,

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in the season of bird-nesting and berrying. These make the fragrant memories of after years. Again and again, in after life, to the man jaded with anxiety and care, the old associations came back laden with pleasant regrets—a breath from the clover fields of youth.

At the period of youth now under consideration the boy has not reached the capacity for the use of slang, the mischief wrought with the catapult, nor the practical jokes nor devilment that will encompass his existence at a later age. He may have indulged slightly in marbles, tops, ball and kite, but ideas of fruit piracy, “laying out,” fishing, hunting, trysting, etc., have not yet taken possession of his youthful mind. Still, he has arrived at the years of accountability for his conduct, and some of his delinquencies and disobedience have demanded the switch. More than this, he has received punishment that was unjust and for offences he did not commit, simply because circumstances were convincing and the teacher had too many other vexations to deal with to give the matter full consideration. But the boy doesn’t forget it, and the injustice rankles in his young heart and plants there the first seeds of a feeling of revenge. Through all of his subsequent career at school, up to manhood and to middle age, he never forgets that circumstance, which made him an unwilling vicarious sacrifice, and the wrong is never forgiven.

Since those old times of thirty or forty years ago the subject of flagellation has become quite a topic.

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The question has assumed about the shape as to whether 'tis better that the boy should suffer this "outrageous punishment," when all other remedies fail, and be flogged into shape, or whether we would shrink from the risk of "brutalizing" him in his tender youth and let him grow up a fire-brand. When one remembers the demeanor and discipline which boys used to one another, it seems hard to imagine that a few strokes with a switch or a cane can injure the moral susceptibilities of such a pickle; and, indeed, to hear the arguments of the sentimentalists upon this subject makes one wonder if they have ever been boys at all. Even if it was settled that the boy, or some portion of him, is not too sacred a thing to be chastised, the persistent "birch-reformers" have followed with questions of "how and where." Whipping on the hands had been found effectual, though the cane had many advocates. The great educator of youth, Mr. Bonnycastle, (in "Midshipman Easy"), was a great advocate of the cane. "Observe," says he, "you flog upon a part mostly quiescent, but you cane upon all parts, from the head to the feet. When the first sting of the birch is over, there is a dull sensation, whereas the effect of the cane is felt upon all the parts, which are required for muscular action." To do the old philosopher justice, he only proposes thus to treat obstinate and disobedient boys. The old pedagogue then goes on to explain that the two strongest impulses in our nature are fear and love. In theory, acting upon the latter is very beautiful, but

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in practice, it sometimes fails to answer, because our self-love is stronger than our love for others. And when a friend suggested that we have those who would introduce a system of schooling without correction, and who maintain that caning is degrading, even to bad boys, he retorted, "there are still a great many fools in the world."

But while we of America have been agitating this question, our English cousins, not to be outstripped, have brought some rich and unique results to bear upon it. From an advertisement in a certain fashionable paper in London it would seem that a long stride had been made, whereby the comforts of home are to be combined with the discipline of the school. The advertisement was as follows:

To Parents:—Unruly boys and girls, of any age, visited and punished, at their own houses, by a thorough disciplinarian, accustomed to administer corporal punishment. Terms:—Five shillings for two visits.

This is certainly being "visited" for our transgressions, and yet one would have hoped, in the case of a thorough disciplinarian—one who understood his business—that one visit would have been enough. Still, the same idea might have been farther extended than five shillings, and for a guinea, no doubt, one could get a ticket "for a course" as at the swimming

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baths. It is curious that the immense convenience to the young culprits in "being waited upon in their own homes," is not made more of a drawing card. The professor, no doubt, supplies his own instruments, though the statement is omitted. Let us hope, for the sake of nervous persons in the neighborhood, that it includes a gag. His calling is certainly a novelty, and though we have known nearly every kind of tutor to be employed in home education, this one is certainly out of the ordinary. The gentleman who taught the young people to dance (in joy, not misery) is the nearest approach to him.

Before the close of the period of child life, here comprehended, from five to ten years, the youngster will have become an adept in many of the arts and crafts of boyhood, and have fully imbibed the many superstitious characteristics of that period. As he does not reach perfection, in all that constitutes a full-fledged boy, however, until after ten years, we will incorporate into his next era (ten to fifteen) many of the facts, characteristics and manners that could properly have had their origin in his earlier era.

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CHAPTER II.

The Father to the Man.

WHEN a boy stands on the threshold of his tenth birthday the years behind him seem like long ages, and he surveys the past much as an octogenarian might do. To him time has dragged along so slowly that he would, if he could, hasten its pace to place him in the estate of manhood—the goal, which so soon engages the absorbing thought of youth. To lad and lass this tenth birthday has a deep and impressive meaning, as it practically marks the half of the period which is carrying them forward to manhood and womanhood. It is an anniversary unclouded by that shadow which creeps over it in later life—the dread of growing old. There is no sorrowing for that other year gone, which is bringing the end closer and closer; on the contrary, we cannot believe in an end, or if we do, it cannot affect us; we cannot realize it and never think of it. The peep we get of the prospect of life, lying before us, looks simply interminable, inexhaustible—a path of roses that must, like the brook, go on forever. With a vista like this opening to our views there is little wonder that the birthdays of the young, with all they include, are conspicuous and paramount among anniversaries. Ranking only

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second to birthdays in favor, comes Christmas, and there are a thousand good reasons for this being a notable anniversary during our days of adolescence. Though we may still have a passing fancy for Santa Claus, it is pre-eminently holiday time, feasting time, pantomime time, and a time for "high jinks" generally.

And this holiday season brings to mind an advertisement which appeared in the *London Church Times*, several years ago, with reference to the "Angel-of-the-House"—the boy. It read as follows:

Parent in adverse circumstances will be grateful to lady or gentleman who would kindly entertain boy in holidays without payment. Gentlemanly boy, excellent conduct.

A parent must be in adverse circumstances, indeed, to part with this delightful companion. As a general rule, however, those who have to entertain a youth, no matter how gentlemanly, for six weeks or so, would be willing enough to depute that pleasure to others. The word "entertain" has a wide meaning with the male juvenile; some may like music, poetry and fine arts, but the majority prefer toy pistols or anything that makes a noise. If our boys, like the poor, were always with us, they would soon be orphans, as no parental constitution could stand it; the success of our school system consists, in reality, not so much in its teaching and discipline, but in its taking them

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off our hands for three-quarters of the year. If our advertising parent succeeded in providing for his progeny during the holidays he must have considered his adverse circumstances at an end and his good luck to have permanently set in. His best chance of an offer must have been from some invalid bachelor or spinster, to whom the doctors had recommended "change," but we fear that most of them would conclude with Pizarro: "We want no change and least of all such change as you can give us."

When you entertain a boy you must be prepared, in every particular, to take the place of his doting parent, as he will draw no fine distinctions, but assume that, as he is the joy of the household he has every right to your indulgence. Among the paramount prerequisites he must have plenty to eat. He is not so choicé about his provender, but he wants an unlimited amount of it. It is quantity, not quality, that is the most serious concern to a boy when it comes to eating. He is not terrified by the edicts of the anti-everythingarians, as to lurking microbes, germs and bacteria, that may infest all we eat and drink. Indigestion and dyspepsia are mere empty words to him, as he stores away fruit and pies, pickle and sauce, jelly and cornbread, cheese, radishes and molasses, washed down with copious draughts of buttermilk. Indeed, our boy, like nature, abhors a vacuum, and he doesn't care whether the food is nitrogenous, starchy or saccharine. He thinks that by taking something of everything he meets physiolog-

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ical requirements in the fats, oils and minerals, having no concern about hygienic laws. What a blessing is the small boy's ignorance of science, which is persistently demonstrating, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that all of us are breathing, eating and drinking the germs of disease. They can't terrify him with all their theories about trichina, tuberculosis and pluro-pneumonia hiding around with deadly intent, in all that he holds most dear. He is a daring preserver of the species, who, at the risk of life, would demonstrate that we can still eat and drink just about what we please, and not be forced to call on the undertaker any earlier than did our forefathers.

Our boy has now arrived at an age too, if allowed full sway, when he can do a vast amount toward his own entertainment. In fact, he is beginning to have secrets of the most momentous character, and in the matter of his amusements he is ambitious to do things for himself, instead of having them done by others. This is a marked characteristic of childhood. They would gladly live in a paradise of their own creation, and this is evidenced by their play-houses, mud-pies and improvised toys and tools. He would make a foot ball from the bladder of an animal, which, blown tight and fastened, is not a bad imitation. Even in the matter of bullets for his pistol and cannon, he prefers to cast them himself, which occupation he finds delightful. Any boy of spirit prefers to make his own boats and kites, while he would never think of buying a catapult, or, as the old-time boys called them,

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“nigger-killers.” With this catapult the small boy feels that he can march into the forest and kill any bird or animal that is encountered. He will spend whole days shooting at sparrows and tomtits, without result, and return to the task as faithfully on the morrow as though he had been blest with wonderful good luck. There are some strong and serious reasons why the general public dislikes these catapults in the hands of a juvenile; and when an embargo was placed upon them at home, as well as by the townspeople, we used to sneak away to the meadows and woods, indulge ourselves in the pleasure and then hide them away until the next day. Sometimes we would choose sides and have battles, limiting our ammunition to very small pebbles, and calling the respective sides Rebels and Yankees, or Democrats and Republicans.

The small boy soon becomes a politician, as unflinching and uncompromising in his imaginary convictions, as ever the worthy paterfamilias dared to be. He has imbibed at home all that he has ever heard father say as to the shortcomings and demerits of the opposition, and he goes forth a most rabid partisan among his playmates, espousing of course the side which has virtually come to him by heredity. Environment can create no change in his politics, no matter where he is placed, and he furnishes the best practical answer to all the abstruse theories of Darwin and Lamarck. And the boy is a patriot as well as a politician, as none can excel him in the warmth

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of his fervor, with George Washington, Grant and Lee as his standards. It crops out in the boy's selections for declamation, where brave deeds and loyalty to country are made prominent. Foremost among his preferences are "Horatius at the Bridge," "Marco Bozzaris" and "Bingen on the Rhine."

And when the Civil war broke out the southern boy was first to learn to rehearse the lyrics of loyalty and passion, which many known and unknown authors contributed to that period. "The Bivouac of the Dead," "Give Back the Sword," "Ashes of Glory," "Maryland, my Maryland," "The Bonny Blue Flag," and scores of other pieces engaged his most patriotic concern. He was also stirred by the martial airs and battle hymns that lent such inspiration and enthusiasm to our soldiers. The inspiring strains of "Dixie" filled his youthful heart with passionate patriotism, as it did the old soldier, who was going forth to battle. This expressive, inspiring and beautiful national air belongs to the nation, because, as President Lincoln said, "it was captured with the other effects of the Confederacy." It was common, in those old war-times, to hear every boy whistling or singing some one of the many patriotic airs, as well as other ballads of the period, such as "Rally Around the Flag, Boys," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," "John Brown's Body," "Pat Malloy," and "Josephus Orange-blossom," besides many transposed lyrics of an earlier period. There was patriotic music all over the land, and no class of the community aided more in

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keeping these old songs alive than the small boy. Many old songs of that time, too, have not yet been discarded while many of them will continue to live as long as pathetic, homely and touching lyrics can reach the heart. It may not have been a master mind that wrote "Ben Bolt," but there is something about this air and the sentiment of the song that leads one to think that it cannot wholly die or be forgotten. The same is true of "Home, Sweet Home," which is a universal lyric, touching a responsive chord in every heart, and therefore possessing elements of immortality. "Down on the Suwanee River" may not enthuse the disciples of the Wagnerian schools, but no musician, with a real love for his art and a proper conception for the true musical feeling, can fail to see the transcendent beauties of this southern song.

There are other simple melodies of forty years ago which maintain considerable vitality. Among these might be mentioned "Twenty Years Ago," "Evangeline," "Old Folks at Home," "Nellie Gray," "Old Plantation Home," "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," and the "Annie" group; namely, "Annie Laurie," "Annie of the Dale" and "Gentle Annie." There are still others which came out of that time and are still occasionally encountered, reviving the memories of long ago, viz:—"The Old Kentucky Home," "Nora O'Neal," "Old Cabin Home," and many others.

A certain wise man has said, "Let me write the ballads of a country, and I care not who makes her

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laws." This is not meant to disparage statesmanship, but to give emphasis to the fact that songs, accepted by the people as expressions of national sentiment, have a far greater influence than the statutes enacted to carry out given political doctrines and purposes. In fact, there seems to be something in human nature which demands a musical outlet for certain forms of patriotic feeling. There never was a nation so poor that it did not possess at least one ballad dear to the general heart and serving as a source of inspiration to its people in times of peril.

The dauntless courage and heroism of boyhood in times of great national peril, as well as at critical moments in ordinary life, has inspired the bards of all ages, while some of the most powerful and touching lyrics of the past have been devoted to this rich theme. There is the touching fate of "Casabianca," dying at his post of duty, on the blazing quarter-deck of a French battleship; the deathless glory of the soldier boy of "Bingen, Sweet Bingen on the Rhine"; numerous heroic deeds of the boys of the Revolution and during the subsequent Indian wars. Such incidents deserve to live in song and story, and to be wreathed with chaplets of glory in the pantheon of immortality.

The history of the war of the Rebellion is replete with such deeds of boyish daring and heroism, which are among the most touching and glorious events of that dark period of our national life. "The Drummer Boy at Shiloh" was only one of many youthful

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patriots who fearlessly faced death in all its horrid forms; the glorious feat of young Dick West at Perryville, and that of the boy, Billy Durham, at Vicksburg, who seized a shell, with its burning fuse, and threw it over the ramparts. These are only isolated instances of heroic deeds, with which boyhood has aided in making immortal history. Though prohibited from enlistment they adopted every specious device to join the armies, not only declaring themselves of legal age, but when defeated in this, hiding among the luggage of the forage and ammunition wagons and appearing in the thick of an engagement.

The war period also brought its trials and hardships to the homes of the South, where the boy was left as the sole and only protector of the family. How well he discharged this serious obligation is shown by the record of peace and quiet, which almost universally reigned, remote from the scenes of war. Though surrounded by five million slaves, who could not feel otherwise than inimical to the cause for which the Southrons were fighting, it is creditable to the uniform good behavior of these blacks, towards the wives and children of their white masters, that few criminal or overt acts were committed. It was easily in the power of the negro, at this time, to have dealt a serious blow and materially assisted in the consummation of his freedom, and no matter from what motive he desisted, it certainly

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furnishes a bright page in his history for which he deserves unstinted credit.

From the operation of blockades, and being shut off from the outside world, there was a transformation in every southern home, as soon as the meagre supplies of luxuries, clothing and beverages had been exhausted. Everything, in theory and practice, soon wore the air of the home-made. Ales, wines and brandies, previously imported in large quantities, were soon unknown luxuries, and their place was supplied from distillations of the cereals, fruits and berries common in the country. Coffee and tea were at first mixed with other things to extend the life of the small and precious stock on hand, but soon these were exhausted and substitutes were found in wheat, corn, potatoes and okra, which were parched, dried and ground, making a very fair substitute beverage. There was an almost immediate shortage of clothing, dress goods and finer materials, and this at once resuscitated and the ancient loom and spinning-jenny, which assumed proportions of an almost universal industry in a very brief period. Even the hour-glass, flint and steel and other ancient improvisations were dug from their forgotten graves and sublimated to everyday use. On every hand ingenuity and embryonic invention were struggling with important problems, forced upon the country by the exigencies of war. In the midst of these practical trials and perplexities of his elders, the boy was also bereft of some of his most cherished toys, playthings

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and ornaments, but was equal to the occasion, and he, too, became an inventor and creator of no mean ability. His kites, slings and pop-guns were easily manufactured; it was more difficult with his tops, balls, marbles, explosives and cannon, but he was undaunted, and some of the rude imitations then fabricated are among the most interesting relics of the war period. Pieces of hard rubber, taken from car-bumpers, secured and covered by windings of yarn thread, constituted the ball of the schoolboy; pieces of old iron pipe were filed off and made into cannon, while many of the hard woods were fashioned into tops. Finger rings and earrings, as well as brooches and other ornaments were made from old pieces of gutta-percha, as well as the softer portion, or upper part, of the hoofs of animals. In fact the boy was not far behind his elders in improvising substitutes for whatever appealed to his individual taste and requirements.

Practical Jokes and Ingenious Pranks.

CHAPTER III.

Practical Jokes and Ingenious Pranks.

THE small boy is the pioneer in practical joking, and it constitutes one of the chief joys of his life. He may not be considerate of the feelings of animals, or his fellows, but they nevertheless suffer, both mentally and physically, in being the victims of his arts and crafts. His idea of practical joking is to produce laughter, and he oftentimes allows no obstacle to stand in his way in carrying out his pranks, jokes and cruelty.

These will include jerking a chair from underneath an unsuspecting playmate, as he is about to take his seat; attaching cans to the tails of timorous dogs and starting them on a wild run through the village; tying the tails together of two belligerent tomcats and hanging them over a clothesline, to tear and lacerate each other to death; concealing stolen articles in another's pocket or desk, and having them accused of thievery; placing bent pins in the bottoms of chairs, or deftly arranging them in the bed where the victim is to sleep; stealing or hiding the clothes of playmates while they are in bathing; "nagging on" fights, by telling each belligerent of insults the other has publicly offered him; decoying "Cissy-boys"

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away from home and then running off and leaving them, in their trepidation, in some lonely spot; stretching wires across the sidewalks at night to trip up unsuspecting pedestrians; making bogies and scarecrows and setting them up, in a life-like way, in "Black Mammy's" cabin; dressing in ghostly habilaments and knocking at sister's door to frighten her when the door's opened; throwing rocks through the sash and panes of untenanted houses; stuffing cotton in the schoolbell, or taking out the clapper, to arouse the ire of the teacher; placing cockle-burrs underneath the tails of docile and confiding animals to see them aroused to a mad pitch of frenzy and excitement. These pranks, cruelties and general devilment are only a small proportion of the numberless crafts of the small boy, to which might be added his thieveries in pear and apple orchards as well as "goober" fields and melon patches.

There is a disposition on the part of some men, who have entered the serious walks of life, to blot out this period of their existence, if not to openly deny ever having taken part in any such cruelties and diabolism as are here revealed. But such shirking or denial is useless, as there never lived a boy who did not possess a large amount of inherent savagery, which only needed the time and opportunity for full demonstration. A volume could be written about every man's life, and you can never tell at a glance what has been the past of a man. I know an humble carpenter, who was once a prize orator in one of our

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famous institutions of learning. Not far from my boyhood's home lived an old, decrepit woman that had been reduced almost to beggary, and yet, in her youth she is said to have been a woman of marvelous beauty. Poems were dedicated to her charms, and duels were arranged between her rival suitors. Over there, in the secluded spot, lives a hermit who all his life has been doing atonement for killing his school-teacher in a moment of passion; there goes a man who is leading an intensely religious life—the result of remorse in having caused the death of a comrade over a peccadillo in youth. Young people are interesting for what they are, but the older folks are interesting for what they have been, if they could be induced to tell the story. As a further illustration of the innate savagery in boys, I will relate a true story of one of those occurrences which often lead to a lifetime of suffering. As one of the participants I can give the proper version and the true facts.

There were three of us—boon companions—in those early days who shared each other's joys and sorrows. In school days we were in league against all the other boys, and it was only by a special dispensation—unanimous consent—that any outsider was admitted in our holiday excursions, to share with us the equivocal glory of the mischief that was generally perpetrated.

Billy Wilson was the acknowledged leader, and his decision upon matters of vital import to the boys was nearly always final—whether the matter in hand

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was a predatory excursion to a neighboring melon-patch, the combined assault upon an inviting orchard, or a secret conclave in the depths of the swamp, to decide upon the fate of a neighbor's boy who had tattled upon us. Billy was always the chief spokesman, and, as he had the courage of his convictions, he was always foremost in any danger that lurked, and the first to resent an interference or to attack an adversary.

Ralph Henson was a boy of many admirable characteristics and a good second to the pranks of Wilson, but he was quick-tempered and often got us into trouble that could have been easily avoided if he had kept his wits and acted with ordinary prudence. In his moments of anger, too, he was dangerous, even to ferocity, and would stop at nothing if he felt that he had been wronged or any undue advantage taken of our trio.

As for myself, in those far-away days of school life, I will attempt no detailed description, but suffice it to say that I entered with spirit and energy into all our boyish undertakings and though inclined to peacefulness, I was often unwillingly drawn into the fights of my more belligerent companions. It was not long before what we termed our "Triple Alliance" was the occasion of the most bitter envy, or even vindictiveness of the other boys, who had been excluded from our set.

Very naturally this led to a combination of all the outside elements against us, and it was gen-

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erally understood that when one of us should be caught away from the others we were likely to get a "thumping." This avowed hostility was more especially directed against Billy and Ralph, though I was often pounced upon for no other reason than the fact of their not succeeding in squaring scores with the other two. As I didn't fancy this sort of vicarious sacrifice, and had been repeatedly disciplined by my father for engaging in unnecessary broils, I resolved to declare a truce and come to an understanding with the enemy. Jack Clarke was the leader of the opposition forces and he ordered a suspension of hostilities, the armistice to last until the following Saturday morning, when we were to hold a peace conference in a distant chestnut grove about two miles away from the village. As I had said nothing to Billy and Ralph regarding this most momentous step they were somewhat puzzled for the next few days at the peaceful turn of events, and before the expiration of the truce, they were chafing under the enforced restraint and actually "spoiling" for a *mêlée*.

In some way they got an inkling of the proposed conference and with only a vague idea of its purposes, immediately construed it as a piece of treason for which I was to be brought to a serious account. There was a determined, resolute look in the face of Wilson and an ugly scowl on the countenance of Ralph when I met them early the next morning. As I felt a certain amount of guilt for what I was about to do, without consulting them, I inwardly knew

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that their demeanor and appearance betokened a knowledge of the secret. But they did not say a word that would indicate the least information on the subject, and rather showed a disposition to talk upon the most foreign topics. After they had ascertained, by circumlocutive questioning, about the time I should leave home, they gradually drew away and disappeared. Two hours later I was on the way to the rendezvous in the chestnut wood. As I approached the place, with my thoughts somewhat excitedly absorbed in the plan I was revolving in mind, I formed a vague idea, or imagined that I saw some one disappearing in the recesses of the wood. For a moment I thought it was Clarke, who might have preceded me, but on reaching the place there was no appearance of any one and I sat down in the shade of a great tree to once more run over and mature my plans. I had made up my mind to withdraw from active participation in the Triple Alliance, but would reserve the right of a moral support to my two colleagues. I had pondered over this but a few minutes, when the sound of approaching footsteps caused me to look up, and I saw Jack Clarke nearing the wood. He carried himself with a mean sort of swagger, as he had much of the bully in his composition, and this rather irritated me, and before he reached me I had half resolved to desist from treating with him upon any terms. Negotiations were opened, however, by his proffer of a piece of apple

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he was leisurely eating, and we both assumed seats under the tree.

"Well," he said, "if you's ready to give them other two cusses the 'shake,' we'll just go to business."

He had hardly finished his sentence when two figures jumped out of the undergrowth, and, in an instant, I found myself in the sturdy grip of Billy Wilson, while Ralph and Jack were tumbling about in a mighty struggle for the mastery. Clarke, believing that treason had been practiced, fought like a Trojan, and in a few moments had pounded Ralph's face unmercifully and had taken a vicious hold upon his throat. Just then a glimse of Ralph's face showed him transfigured and there was a look of a demon in his eye. Wrenching himself lose by a quick movement he drew out his pocket-knife and quickly opening it, rushed upon his adversary, like a maddened beast, and ere we had time to even consider his intentions, he buried the blade to the hilt in Clarke's neck. He fell backward under the force of the blow and as we rushed up and caught Ralph, his victim attempted to rise, as a great purple stream spurted from the wound, and he once more succumbed from the loss of blood.

We were all transfixed with horror and terror, until the poor fellow, who was gasping and groaning, brought us to our senses. I rushed away for a doctor and Wilson ran to the home of the boy's parents to impart the startling news, leaving Ralph to attend his victim until we should return. When a doctor

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arrived the patient had fainted, but a stout bandage, pressed against the wound, had staunched the flow of blood. His head rested easily against a pillow of Ralph's coat, but the latter had suddenly and completely disappeared. The poor boy had done all he could for his wounded adversary, and, terrified at the awful deed he had committed, as well as the dying appearance of his victim, had precipitately fled, no one knew where.

The doctor declared the wound to be extremely serious. The wounded boy was removed to his home, where he lingered between life and death for several months, though to the intense gratification of all of us he finally recovered. In the meantime, it had required most powerful influences to prevent a criminal prosecution of Billy and myself, although we had made a clear and concise statement of the whole affair, Ralph was never again seen in that community. After many years of absence, vague rumors reached us that he had been wonderfully successful in mining operations in the far west. Jack Clarke, reformed, steady and shrewd, became a prosperous merchant in his native state, having been the recipient of a mysterious check for five thousand dollars, with no other explanation than the enclosure from a western bank—and every one knew from whence it came. Billy Wilson became a famous lawyer and now occupies a seat, as an influential member of the United States Congress.

In spite of all these facts as to the inherent bad-

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ness of boys, we still hear sedate school boards and educational philosophers denouncing corporal punishment, when, at times, the Russian knout vigorously applied, would hardly seem out of place. While the old system of flagellation, for anything and everything, was wrong, its total abolition from the modern school is a great mistake. There are certain boys—bad boys—who are afraid of nothing but physical pain. You waste on them, alike sarcasm and pleadings; they laugh at you; and what is worse than all, they demoralize other and younger boys. School discipline, with a bad boy or two in the class, is an impossibility. A sound thrashing, physiologically administered, is a curative measure, and is really the only hope, in school, of reforming ruffianly boys, and those inclined to be sneaks and cowards. If such testimony will be accepted, I will say that I was an average boy at school, in all that goes to make up the good, bad and indifferent traits of that period. And I am willing to go on record as saying that all corrections that I received in school—and they were not a few—tended greatly and effectively to advance my educational interest; and I fancy the truthful opinions of most men will coincide with mine, as regards their own educational discipline.

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CHAPTER IV.

Superstitions, Terrors and Griefs.

THE child has been called father to the man and this is undoubtedly true, not only in the world of realities, but in the world of imagination. The boy early in life begins to imbibe the legends of the mysterious, and to enter that region of shadows and phantoms; a region of shapeless forms and visions, where the real has given place to the unreal, and all is vague, obscure and contradictory. It is a misty realm, in which dwell all the gods of mythology; a world beyond the Styx, into which Æneas wandered—an unexplored kingdom of the dead, haunted by the lone bark of Charon—a land where, with dubious oracles, the midnight hags confound the soul of Macbeth; the region of Gulliver, trembling in the huge grasp of his Brobdingnagian host. Indeed, from Santa Claus to the Goblin Crew of Yule, the air is full of myths and dreams, while the sight of holly and mistletoe reopens a world of fancies and folklore. These supernatural creatures are accredited with inhabiting regions sacred to themselves. Sequestered dales, rich in gorgeous flowers, or grottoes of coral and pearl, in shining dells of the sea. Elves, fairies, brownies and weefolk are called into exist-

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ence, while the creative fancy peoples the air with soul-compelling divinities. These fairies, elves, nymphs and pixies have existed for time immemorial. Chaucer, who knew everything and had a ripe, rich heart for everybody, makes them old people even in King Arthur's time—that reign so much associated with the glamorous nursery legends of our delectable days. In his "Merchant's Tale" he says:

*"Full often-time he, Pluto, and his quene
Proserpina, and all her facrie
Disporten him, and maken melodie
About that well."*

And these weefolk are said to ride on steeds, with hoofs so ethereally light that "they would not dash the dew from the chalice of the hare-bell."

But a sterner and more fierce superstition seizes the boy as he emerges from extreme youth and mingles with the darkies and other associates. His credulous mind is prolific soil for any and everything out of the natural, and he embraces, with avidity, all that is related about ghosts, witches, the Evil Eye, the incantations of the Voodoo, and all the charms, spells and strange powers attributed to witchcraft. And the boy, with his innocence and inexperience, can't be blamed for subscribing to this belief, with the pages of history so luminous with the fanaticisms of his elders. There is perhaps no chapter, in all the record of human frailty and weakness, that is more painful or astounding to our modern notions, than that de-

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voted to witchcraft. The delusion was not like one of those sudden outbreaks of fanaticism, which spring up, nobody knows how, and die away as suddenly; it was regarded as a lasting evil to be punished with the severest penalties of the church and the state.

For the most part the people who suffered and died under this reign of terror were women. They were generally old and ugly; but sometimes young and fair women suffered on the rack and at the stake under the terrible imputation of witchcraft. To be accused of the crime was in most cases to be condemned, as there was little chance of escape, for the test to which accused persons were put, in order to try their innocence, generally proved mortal. To throw an old woman into the water, and if she sinks, to save her character at the expense of her life, is hardly kind to the old woman. A prominent historical illustration of the English faith in witchery is that of Richard III., who accused Edward's wife and Jane Shore of bewitching him and making his arm a "blasted sapling."

A similar accusation of sorcery is found in the career and death of the ill-fated Joan of Arc, who was declared a "devilish witch and satanical enchantress."

Witchcraft is indeed a fruitful subject, but enough has been said here for our purpose, and that purpose is to remind the reader that this terrible form of superstition, like so many others which stain the pages of history, has never yet died out. It still

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held force in our childhood, and there is no evidence to show that it is yet extinct in the country districts. Among the southern negroes, where it has taken the form of Voodooism, it still undoubtedly manifests great tenacity of life, from the annual gatherings which continue to take place in remote and secret corners of thinly populated sections of the country. They still have their witch-doctors and soothsayers who, for small stipends, will administer to all kinds of physical and mental wants.

Among the terrors of childhood, outside of the corporal punishment both at home and school, possibly superstition holds the most prominent place in the youthful mind. Foremost among these, "Ha'nts" have ever held the greatest terror to boys, and this superstition was always associated with a cat, which was supposed to come back from the spirit land to terrify timorous youngsters. And while this fact was ominous and was fed by the Voodoo's teaching, it placed a wide gulf between the boy and the cat. Indeed, it would be an anomaly to find the juvenile who could ever summon a genuine spark of love in his heart for grimalkin.

I well remembered that my father had a groom, in the long ago, who was much exorcised in his mind on the subject of dreams. He was not an estimable fellow, and I am afraid he did not teach me much good. He had a small collection of dream books. Where he got them I know not, but many a time have I sneaked into the harness-room to pore over

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those books. I can remember little more than the look of them now, but my flesh used to creep at one dream, which was set down with a horrid vividness. It was the dream of an unhappy visionary, who, as he slept, beheld two enormous cats, with great fiery eyes, glaring at a wreath of curling smoke that kept rising from the earth, and was forever changing its form. Suddenly the cloud-like appearance assumed a human shape, and then one cat sprang upon the other, and the mangling, howling and slaughter supervened. The dream book went on to say that this was dreamt by a Jack Somebody for three consecutive nights before he murdered Tom Somebodyelse, whom he found with his sweetheart Polly. It was in vain that the slaughtered pair were buried in the same hole, for Jack had dreamt that the smoke issued from the bowels of the earth, and that meant that murder will out, and so it came to pass that Jack was hanged. The dream book said that "smoke rising from the ground meant detection," as was evident from the instance given. Therefore I was impressed that when you dreamed of curling smoke, you would avoid following in the steps of Cain. We were all firm believers in the cat's collegueship with the devil, as the negroes could cite numerous cases of where cats had sucked the breath of infants.

Other terrors and superstitions of childhood were passing graveyards at night, the hooting of owls, haunted houses, and hearing strange sounds in the middle of the night.

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But beyond the ghost that came along the church aisles and corridors, or followed the heels of the murderer with avenging hands, there was another personage who filled the youthful mind with unspeakable terror, and that was "Old Satan." The nurse and black mammy had supplied all details as to his hideous proportions, horned head, cloven hoof and forked tail, while at church and Sunday-school we were apprised of his awful havoc in the world and in the Plutonian regions where he gathered and burned his victims. Just what this hideous creature has done towards moulding childish character, by creating unparalleled consternation and fear of him, is not easy to determine, but he certainly plays an important part in child life, either for weal or woe.

Returning to the subject of ghosts it must be admitted that this mania is as deeply rooted in a boy's mental organism, as the passion for games and practical jokes. These ghosts always came with hostile purposes. They are murderous demons, spectral vampires, carnivorous blood-thirsty night-prowlers, stealing upon the sleeper with cat-like steps. To the children of nature, nocturnal phantoms and bugbears are still synonymous terms. At sight of a "materialized spirit," the village boy's first impulse would not be to stop and inquire as to whose astral body it might be, but to whoop and run with a speed that would literally "burn the wind."

The boy never took much stock in the wraith or spectral form of the astral body; to him they were

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all horrible ghosts, and he would hold no acquaintance with them. You couldn't make him believe them harmless any more than that you might convince him that the pills and rhubarb that you gave him were sweet and palatable.

The spectres which have always frightened our plantation negroes were ogres of the same sort. Professor Devereaux in the "Southern Bivouac," gives us a characteristic sample:—A notoriously wicked "nigger" was riding along a country road late at night, when he spied a curious looking object on the stake-and-rider fence on the side of the road. His horse at the same moment balked and by snorting and trembling, evinced a great fear of the thing—whatever it was—and refused to pass it. No one had ever supposed this spot, or any adjacent one, to be haunted, and the negro had no reason to think he was "gwyne to be kotedched," unless on the score of his general bad character, or the fact that then, in violation of standing orders, he was riding one of his master's best horses. He described the object which terrified his horse and soon afterward himself, as resembling a huge grub-worm. It was white, and about the size of a large flour sack and was leisurely crawling along on the top rails of the fence. After striving in vain by kicks and blows to force the horse forward he thoughtlessly swore a big oath.

Instantly the thing—or ogre—fell from the fence and wriggling across the road, squirmed up on the horse's back behind the terrified "nigger" and sat on

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end, with its clawed pedals on his shoulders, and its head, like that of a gigantic caterpillar, thrown before his face, its huge, wormy jaws emitting an unearthly and appalling chuckle. The darkey howled, and the horse, now mad with fright, fled like the wind. Suddenly the thing released its hideous clutch, dropped to the ground, and disappeared.

Among other myths and superstitions of boyhood is that which attaches good luck to the possessor of the left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit; or the smooth nut of the buck-eye; looking over the right shoulder at the new moon or hanging an old horse shoe over the door, dreaming of snakes, burning bread or breaking a mirror, are infallible indications of bad luck; never start upon a journey on Friday, and beware of all things containing the number thirteen; if you burn hair cut from the head, witches will find it and give you a headache, while carrying milk over running water will cause the cow to go dry.

Among the numerous fears of boyhood may be reckoned sleeping alone, remote from the apartments of others of the household. This usually produces sleeplessness and a wideawake boy, alone in a dark room at midnight, is very apt to make the fact known to the balance of the house. At first he is ashamed to display his fears, but as he lies still queer sounds emerge out of the silence—sounds, which in the daytime he would wholly disregard. He hears low, stifled voices on the lawn, or under his window—he

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is sure that a creak on the doorstep betokens the stealthy approach of a burglar, and the indistinct, surly growl of the watch-dog, is convincing proof that the house is surrounded by murderous minions. He dashes out of bed and plunges, terror stricken, into mother's apartments to tell about the invisible enemies, which are assembling or have assaulted the house. The frightful lies which boys can invent under such excitement, would do justice to a sailor. It is a proneness to exaggeration which characterizes all boyish anecdotes and stories. If he should be chased by a single dog he rushes home and tells that a whole pack of vicious canines had come near tearing him to pieces. If a bellowing bull comes plunging across the pasture, with an ominous tail switching in the air, the boy is morally sure that all the vast herd in that enclosure are madly pursuing him. If he sees a covey of quail, he is convinced there are a thousand, and if he encounters a squirrel, the woods are simply full of them.

Among the griefs of boyhood, outside of taking pills or going to the dentist, the most real and poignant is unrequited love. The loves of children, often called "puppy-love," are just as real and genuine as any sentiment of their elders. It has its pathos, its sublimities and its tragedies—its supreme heights of bliss and its lowest depths of despair—which act as powerfully upon their emotional natures, as if they had entered the more serious estate of manhood. The very vigor and vitality of childish love causes

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misery because it dies of its own intensity. It is, while it lasts, as beautiful as the morning-glory, and withers almost as soon.

In the first flush of young affection we cannot believe in the possibility of a change; we cannot imagine that our present idol can be dethroned and are proudly convinced that our valentine of to-day must and will be the valentine of a long to-morrow. But alas, there comes a rude awakening—our air-castles are thrown down—the dream is broken and the world takes on a sombre hue, in presence of the inexorable fact that our undying love is unrequited. The idol, which we had enshrined in our hearts, is not only unfaithful, but pours vitriol upon the wounded and lacerated hearts by showering smiles upon a rival. It is a bitter cup and we bow down in the depths of despair, willing to die upon the funeral pyre of departed love.

The mental agony which the small boy suffers, in making up his mind to go to the dentist, and have a tooth pulled, would furnish a masterpiece to represent terror and cowardice. When he finally screws up his courage to visit the dentist, it is with an air of abject despair that he gets into the chair, while he insists on holding his jaws a few minutes longer, in the hope that the tooth will leap out of its own accord. He looks upon the dentist as an arch enemy of his happiness, and one who delights in torturing mortals. He watches him as he seizes the forceps, and when the ominous request comes "open your

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mouth" he pleads a few moments' respite, that he may, without the dentist's knowledge, take a look at the instrument of torture that is about to be inserted in his mouth. Finally he drops back helpless and in a jiffy the offending tooth is jerked out. Ten to one, he will request the tooth to take away with him, as a sort of practical evidence of his bravery, which he will show to his comrades.

The foundation for bad teeth is generally laid in childhood, commencing when mothers and nurses persist in softening the food and removing bread crust because it may "hurt the teeth," and for a long time the child thus grows up a set of unused organs in its mouth. We then wonder why the poor child has such bad teeth. These teeth are subject to the same laws that govern other organs and their strength and exemption from decay is determined by their use. Understanding this, if we ever become a toothless race it will be our own fault.

Being sick and having the doctor come and give you a lot of nasty medicine is the common experience of boyhood, and constitutes a dark era that is never forgotten. There is little doubt that many times boys have suffered long in secret in preference to making known their ills and being forced to take pills and other medicines, revolting both to the taste and to the stomach. There is something in simply calling the doctor that alarms the boy, who reasons out that home remedies have been unavailing and that his case must be serious when professional skill is

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demand. When the doctor comes, grasps his pulse, and looks at his tongue, he says nothing, but in taciturn meditation, looks from his watch to the ceiling, as though counting the moments when the soul of the patient will take its upward flight. This is an unfortunate habit of many medical men—especially the younger ones—who seem to think that a melancholy countenance is the index of professional wisdom. This is not the case, but even if it were, a reputation which is established at the cost of an invalid's stock of hope or comfort, would be too dearly bought. One of the greatest masters of humor in English fiction, gives an anecdote of the physician who was taken by the patient for the undertaker, and it is not incredible. The same author also describes the elaborate stealthiness with which certain well-meaning persons enter the sick-room as being more calculated to disturb the nerves of an invalid, than the entrance of a horse-soldier at full gallop. Quiet, like righteousness itself, may be overdone, and similarly the gravity very proper to the medical practitioner is often pushed beyond its limit.

Foremost among a boy's antipathies (and no one knows it better than his mother) is being sent to Sunday-school and to church. There may appear, at long intervals of time, as a prominent exception, a boy who loves to attend Sunday-school, but he is such a rare exception that he can't be considered in this history of boy life. The preparation was irksome—learning the catechisms and other lessons was

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too much like the day-school—he was required to sing and he couldn't sing, and he knew that going to Sunday-school also meant that he should remain at church. There was no reason why he should be so violently opposed to Sunday-school, as the task was light and the session short—but it was simply one of those perversities of childhood that are inexplicable.

A boy's antipathy to long prayers and long, incomprehensible sermons is easily explained on very natural grounds. In this particular, he is not unlike the generality of his elders, who share the self-same prejudices with the boy. Emerson has expressed his dislike of the ordinary sermon, because the majority of preachers "go about and about" their subject without presenting anything that one can really take hold of, with the exception perhaps of the text. He says that there is often so little of human nature—of that which actually touches the experience of the hearer—in a discourse from the pulpit, that he has found himself wondering if the preacher had ever been a man at all. I was much amused a few years since at a controversy which occupied the lists, as to the reasons why people do not go to church, and it was curious to observe the diametrically opposite explanations given. There was a general agreement that the sermon was at the bottom of it. One gentleman—and he assuredly stood by himself—thought that it was because sermons were too short; like some patent medicine of which only the large bottles

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can be depended on for a cure, he had no confidence in small doses of doctrine—you must be saturated with it to appreciate it thoroughly. The most numerous body of these controversialists asserted that sermons and prayers were too long, while a respectable minority were of the opinion that the preacher dwelt too much “upon the infidel” (not present) and not with cases before him—those of the congregation. A member of this last class carried his view further and suggested what the preacher should sermonize about. He had given out his text when the gentleman arose (as though forbidding the banns) and begged the minister to set that text aside and to select the following, on which he had a real desire to be enlightened:—“Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them put upon the fringe of their garments a ribbon of blue.” The unfortunate minister, unwilling, and perhaps unable to preach at sight upon such a special subject, declined to obey, and thereby, one fears, has added a unit to the ranks of discontent.

There are a multitude of other things associated with boy life, which properly belong to this division of the subject, but we can only refer to a few of them, and in the briefest possible manner, lest we should be compelled to crowd out or curtail other features. No boy ever lived who was not afraid of a drunken man, altercations upon the street, run-away horses, vicious yard dogs, cows and billy-goats, as well as snakes, lizards and other reptiles. He was equally

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timorous of all the stinging insects, like bees, wasps, hornets and yellow-jackets, beside many other nameless creeping things.

He also had his social trials and tribulations, and being left without an invitation to a candy-pulling, party or picnic, stabbed his pride and left him as miserable as one could be. His humiliation and mortification was complete when he was whipped in presence of the school or was kept in for any bad deportment or missing his lessons. He carried home an aching heart when he had lost all his marbles and possibly his top and kite into the bargain. He had his discomforts with stubbed toes and his summer aggregation of stone bruises, while the cup of his misery was complete when he was kept away from the circus by having the whooping cough.

As an instance of negro superstition, we subjoin the following story:

Uncle Tom was an old-fashioned darkey, with all the good nature and rude attractions which characterize this fast-fading specimen of ante-bellum days. He lived with Aunt Cindy in the little hut on the outskirts of the town, and gained a livelihood by doing odd jobs for the neighbors and raising chickens for the market. Aunt Cindy contributed to the livelihood by "takin' in washin'," and the fame of her superiority in this line was far and wide.

The children of this union had been widely dispersed, and though a numerous progeny had been vouchsafed them by an inscrutable Providence, they

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had become scattered, after reaching the estate of manhood, and there was little information as to their exact whereabouts. Only one, "Jim," the youngest son, was ever considerate enough to occasionally return to share the frugal comforts of the paternal roof, and gladden the hearts of his aged parents.

"Jim" had attained a certain amount of success as a barber in a distant city, but like most of the negroes in this calling, he was very improvident and spent most of his earnings for fine clothes and gewgaws, to maintain a social position in the *bon-ton* circles of his race.

But he had the one redeeming trait of love for the old people, and they, in turn, regarded Jim with something akin to idolatry, and their happiness seemed to have reached its most supreme height whenever he chose to make them a visit, which was about the closing month of summer.

But, for some unexplained reason, Jim had not made his annual visit this season. The old people had anxiously awaited some tidings from the absent boy, but none came. Autumn had now passed and the wintry winds had begun to whistle through the chinks of the cabin, as the old couple sat and gazed into the fire with sad and longing looks. Only that day, for the third time, Uncle Tom had requested "Marse" George to write again for some word from the delinquent son.

"Hit's nity curious, Mammy," said Tom, after considerable meditation, and he fully realized her mind

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was upon the same subject. "Hit's mity curious 'bout dat boy. He nebber acted so cawse he wanter. Dat ain't Jim, but de Lor' knows why he don't sont sum writin' back."

Aunt Cindy could answer nothing. The problem was beyond her, and she could only mumble and shake her head, while she puffed more vigorously at her clay pipe, which had been about her only consolation and solace during these months of anxious waiting and longing. The silence which ensued for some time was only broken by the sputtering of the unseasoned logs and the occasional shrieks of the wind as it struggled to enter the cracks. Suddenly an ominous and portentous sound fell upon their superstitious ears—that peculiar, harsh, grating note of the screech-owl, which, to the darkey is an infallible sign of ill luck or bad news.

"Dat settle it," said Uncle Tom, while he gazed absently at vacuity and contemplated the notes of this night bird as removing all doubt and showing plainly that some misfortune had overtaken the last binding hope they had on earth. This circumstance constrained Aunt Cindy to reveal a fact she had kindly intended to keep back from the old man, lest it would add to the burden of apprehension already upon his mind. She had discovered that afternoon a chicken head lying in the yard, with its fatal beak pointed toward the house, and, as though adding to the evil omen, as she entered the door, two straws were lying crossed on the door sill. These were all a full con-

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firmation of some impending disaster, manifested in the fateful screech of the owl. That Jim was now under the spell of the Evil Eye admitted of no doubt, in their superstitious minds, and though he was far away, in unknown parts, they felt it their paternal duty to invoke the aid of certain charms and ceremonies to drive away the ogre from the path of their wayward boy.

Not far up the street, in the negro settlement where Tom lived, resided "Aunt Winnie," the recognized seeress and "conjur woman" of this community of blacks. She was unprepossessing in appearance, but she exercised great influence among the ignorant members of her race, who both feared and respected her, as holding a secret influence over their destiny. To them, she was a venerable witch, who could work spells through the mysterious influence of certain decoctions, or ward off impending trouble by the use of certain charms. To the house of this old "conjur woman" these two old people repaired that night, since they regarded the case as urgent and could not rest another night until this paternal duty was performed. Aunt Winnie received them sullenly, as the Voodoo priestess—for such she was—is supposed to be too deeply absorbed in the mysteries of the supernatural to recognize any conventionalities among ordinary mortals. She heard the recital of the case with stolidity, for the "conjur woman," as we have just said, is not to be moved or stirred by any natural human emotions, as her domain is supposed to be

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beyond human ken. When they had finished, old Winnie sat gazing into the fire for some moments, as though revolving the matter in her mind, and trying to read the fate of Jim in the glaring coals and embers. She then leisurely got down on her knees and slowly raising one of the larger hearth-stones, took from beneath it a small box which she carefully placed upon the chair. Still kneeling before it she closed her eyes, and, while passing her hands in a mesmeric manner back and forth over the lid, mumbled some strange incantation, as though invoking the aid (as she doubtless was) of unseen spirits. This gibberish was uttered in tones soft, low and measured at first, but finally swelled into a loud and strange appeal to some imaginary deity, who was to unravel the mystery in hand. Enjoining her listeners to raise their hands in supplication and close their eyes, she opened the box, which contained a singular assortment of witch "properties"—the heads of lizards, teeth of snakes, beaks of turtles, dried feet of toads, feathers of an owl, besides numerous herbs and seeds of noxious and medicinal plants. Selecting a number of these, she tied them in a small rag, and while continuing to mumble some unrecognizable incantation, she placed the charmed parcel in the hands of Uncle Tom.

He was told to go home, without once looking back, and place the mysterious parcel under his head at night, and by the morning of the third day thereafter, some positive tidings would come of the absent

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son. Let those who laugh at this superstition note carefully what transpired and reconcile it as they will.

For the next two ensuing days the community was thrown into a wild state of excitement by the daring deeds of some unknown highwayman, who assaulted and robbed several citizens and made good his escape. Bloodhounds had been placed upon his track, and all the surrounding country had been scoured for the robber, of whom no definite description could be given. Late in the evening of the second day, when the pursuit was about to be abandoned as hopeless and futile, the distant baying of all the dogs in unison, indicated that they had struck a warm scent, and as the villagers listened the yelping grew louder and nearer, plainly showing that the trail was leading towards town. Down the long slopes of the surrounding hills, the course of the hounds could be marked by their ceaseless barking, and the entire village had become awakened to an intense degree of excitement. Down came the hounds through the leafless undergrowth and plunged into the lower end of the village, quickly making the circuit of the same by an unfrequented lane, which led up into the negro quarters, until the whole pack came to bay at the house of Tom and Cindy. Here, at the closed door of the cabin, they congregated and barked furiously until the pursuers on horses had arrived and dismounted.

The amazement of Tom, and the tearful and plaintive protestations of his wife did not deter the search

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until the fugitive, tracked to his lair and concealed in the rafters of the house, had been discovered and brought into the full glare of the torches. It was Jim. He made a full confession of his many criminal misdeeds, and in the midst of it, old Tom, overcome by the revelation, fell in a fit and was borne into the cabin. In a few days Jim was arraigned, convicted and sentenced; and the day he was to leave for the convict camp he was granted a brief respite to attend the funeral of "Uncle Tom."

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Air-Castles, Day-Dreams, and Hero Worship.

CHAPTER V.

Air-Castles, Day-Dreams, and Hero Worship.

YOUTH is the season of love and romance and the most joyous moments of early life are those spent in day-dreams of the future. It is one of God's greatest gifts, the rearing of castles in the air, those unsubstantial creations, as impalpable as the spirits which the old magicians evoked by spell and cabbala. There may be no power of expression, no faculty of clothing these airy creations in immortal verse, but youth could hear voices in the clouds and see beckoning hands which would transport him into a region not of this world.

What dazzling castles spring out of his enraptured thoughts, gorgeous as these cloud towers, rich in amethyst and opalescent hues, with which the sunset loads the quivering horizon. If never before or afterwards, the poetic spirit kindles in the bosom of youth and maid, at least in the dawn of their first passion, they are poets. They see the earth in a magical light, which it never wore before and will never wear again, except for lovers like themselves. And who would ruthlessly destroy these day-dreams that, at some time, we all had? Of that brief, bright

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season of extravagance it is difficult to write other than extravagantly. In later years, when we know more about the harsh realities of life and the shadows, which lengthen when the sun goes down, how we look back, through half smiles and half tears, to the splendors of those quondam day-dreams.

Mrs. Browning, in her "Rhapsody of Life's Progress," has powerfully described the youthful enthusiasm which overrides all obstacles and accounts no action impossible:

*"And we run with the stag and we leap with the horse,
And we swim with the fish through the broad water-
course;*

*'And we strike with the falcon and hunt with the
hound*

'And the joy that is in us flies out with a bound.

*"Then we act to a purpose—we spring up erect:
We will tame the wild mouths of the wilderness
steeds;*

*We will plow up the seas, in the ships double decked,
We will build great cities and do the great deeds."*

These delightful fancies of youth convert the world into a garden, tenanted only by happy pairs of lovers. They dream long dreams, in which nothing sorrowful or mean intrudes. They find everything beautiful, while the woods echo a music previously unheard. A hundred new meanings are found in the flowers.

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The young lover takes from his sweetheart's bosom a violet, and for the first time becomes aware of all its tenderness. She drops a rose, half crushed, half faded, but he picks it up as if it were a diamond, and lays it next his heart and dreams over its drooping petals, as he sits alone; the fine fragrance which her fingers have lent to it warms his brain, and, gazing at the stars, he crowds the deep blue night with air-castles of the rarest architecture, touched with the purple bloom of love.

The witchery of Bunyan's immortal dream is experienced, more or less, in the lives of most of us; and he is a poor, helpless pilgrim, indeed, who, however footsore and weary, has never in his journey happened on the Good Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains, or has not caught, though it be with strained, hungry eyes, a momentary glimpse of the far-off realms of gold.

In our own experience, whenever in some quiet and restful hour, we turn over the pages of memory's fascinating scrap-book, we find that all the memorable pictures which we can recall are painted in some vivid or peculiar effect of light. It is true there may come up here and there a scene of ineffable sadness, sacred to our own souls alone, into which no light comes, but the general principle as indicated is final. Of such scenes, in our mind, are those tangled forest depths and picnic groves where we played and sang with the birds, or toyed with the funny tribe, along the mossy banks of the sparkling brook, the leafy

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valleys and embowered streams where we hunted the purple blackberries and juicy muscadines, and in delectable languor slaked our thirst from the cool springs of the inviting glades and haunted avenues of the forest.

The dearest idyllic hours which memory brings, perchance have come up under the most modest conditions, so kindly are we dealt with, as to the magic of circumstance and the unstinted measure of our allotted joys. Nature, in her largeness of heart and sweet poetic justice, has given them to all mortals alike—to peasant and peer, to lowly cot and lordly hall.

In the halcyon days—also vulgarly called “salad days”—the boy is a lofty idealist and hero worshiper. He sublimates the occupations of the men about him and prays for the time when he can become a street car driver, conductor, bare-back rider in the circus, or a lion tamer. The latter, I confess, was one of the dreams of my youth. I can never forget the deep and lasting impression made upon me by the daring of the first man I ever saw enter a den of lions. He was called Herr Lengel, and to me was one of the most wonderful men I had ever seen. He had a pair of keen, bright, penetrating eyes, which seemed to really strike fire when he frowned. In these searching eyes, I afterwards learned, lay the secret of his power. With one intense, unwavering glance he held these fierce lions in check; they obeyed it; they trembled at it, and

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crouched before it. Trusting to this power alone and armed only with a tiny dog-whip, he entered the den of wild beasts, laid down in the midst of them, caressed them, rebuked them, grasped their mighty jaws with both hands, showed their teeth to the audience, and then pushed his head into the vicious looking mouth. It was one of the most soul-stirring scenes of my childhood. I was entranced. This wonderful Herr Lengel then came out of the cage and gave us a brief account of his marvellous career and told how he captured these lions. This hero of my imagination had shot bears in Russia, lions at the Cape of Good Hope, gorillas on the Gaboon, tigers in Bengal, wolves in Canada, polar bears in Greenland, buffaloes in Montana, jaguars on the Amazon, and kangaroos in Australia; besides making brief pleasure trips through Ceylon, where, on one occasion he captured a white elephant and engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with an ourang-outang.

I was enraptured and spell-bound by the words and deeds of this man, who was a veritable demi-god in my eyes. I followed him when he left the cage, and timorously waited for an opportunity to speak with him, when he so terrified me by an oath, and a glance from those fierce eyes that I ran away in greatest fright. But I had been hypnotized, and found myself creeping up near him again to listen to his talk. Again, he uttered some wonderful words, to an acquaintance. "So the Rube went agin the grafter, in the Kid-top, and got turned for ten cases."

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Grand words! I couldn't understand them, but I knew they must be inspiring. In a most graceful and eloquent way, he looked toward the band stand, and spoke of the "wind jammers," and the noisy man at the side show as a "barker," while the laborers were "razor backs," the clown was a "patter," the proprietor "the main guy," and the ring master was "cackler." All these wonderful expressions fed my day-dream and increased my admiration for the lion tamer. It was a long time before my aspirations were cooled, and I left off the hope of becoming a wild beast tamer.

This period of youth is also one of unalloyed optimism. It has a confidence which nothing can shake—a sublime faith in doing great things, and working out great ends. The pulse beats strong and the freedom from care enjoyed will not permit rivalries and jealousies to spring up, as they will do when man's estate is reached. It must be admitted that the education of the sentiments receives too little attention in these matter-of-fact days. Everything is subordinate to intellect and muscle, while the sentiments are left to train themselves. The same is true of the emotions, which are considered as being outside of the province of the school room, and the craving of the young idea is manifested in his dramatic gestures and imitative language of the stage. Indeed the child early becomes an actor and it is natural that, when it beholds some grand demonstration of histrionic talent of the stage, a yearning

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for that life is the result. This longing finds an outlet in parlor charades and pantomimes, as well as in the dialogues of the school exhibitions and at the commencement exercises of the colleges. Sometimes unusual and unexpected talent is developed, which at once opens a career of distinction to the aspiring amateur.

The gilt and tinsel of the stage will be revealed later, however, when it is found that there is absolutely no romance in the life behind the curtain—that it is really prosaic, exacting and poorly paid.

Many years ago, in my freshest “salad days”—some of my misguided friends imagined that I could act. As I had never tried, I thought so too. We organized a histrionic club, with some high-sounding name, and it required but one or two meetings to convince us that we were sufficiently equipped to dive at once into some of the tragedies of Shakespeare. To me was assigned one of the leading rôles, but only until we held our first rehearsal. It is unnecessary to linger over the dreary details; be it sufficient to say, that within two tragic hours, I rapidly fell from one rôle to another, until at the close, I was deputed to sit upon a stool behind one of the wings to superintend pulling up and down the curtain.

Another of the fanciful dreams of boyhood was to emulate “Kit” Carson, and other noted scouts and Indian slayers, whose marvellous exploits were at that time recorded in “Beadles’s Dime Novels.” The love for this class of literature was intense, but we

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are glad that it never went so far with us as it did with the little English boy, who set a haystack on fire to "warm the hands of his little sister." But this "blood and thunder" class of literature has an immense power to sway the emotions of the young. I can also remember the eager interest with which the boys devoured the pages of Cooper's "Water-witch," and "Red Rover," Scott's "Pirate," and Byron's "Corsair," and how we even chafed and fretted because these glorious tales were all too brief. "The Lives of the Pirates" was, to my youthful mind, one of the most thrilling books ever written, and it was enhanced with pictures of Captains Kidd, Gibbs, Tench, Morgan and other buccaneers. Few boys in those days escaped the touch of the pirate fever. We would dream whole days of the life of the sea rovers, and far-away palm islands, where we reigned as pirate chiefs, and of our pirate sloops lying at anchor in sheltered bays, with tall masts standing erect, like Norway pines, the grim mariners on the alert to obey our dreaded commander. Those day-dreams were, of course, foolish enough, but they did no harm. The stimulus they gave to the imagination was, on the whole, advantageous, as I believe the boys who went most deeply into the sea rover line of business were by no means the worst scholars.

As we grew older, however, we found that the world was too carefully partitioned out to permit of our seizing upon an island anywhere, where we could

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deposit our booty from gold galleons. We learned, too, that the romance of piracy had passed away, and that the seas were too well patrolled for any repetition to be possible for exploits of the buccaneers and filibusters. We came to the conclusion that the race of pirates was extinct, a conclusion, which, however, a wider and larger knowledge of the social state compelled us to very considerably modify. For, as Shylock tells us, "there be land rats and water rats, land thieves and water thieves," and the truth of the old Jew's assertion is forced upon us by experience. In society, pirates are always on the prowl. They hoist, perhaps, the black flag of scandal, as full of evil augury as any ever lifted by an Olonois or a Montbars. Then, there are the pirates of trade and commerce—the "land rats," and those who wage clandestine war against woman's honor and man's reputation—who prey upon the innocent and defenceless. Would that they might be gibbeted in chains, like the corsair of old, as a warning to the whole pirate brood.

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CHAPTER VI.

Vacations, Sports and Recreations.

CERTAIN words and phrases, like certain looks and tones, have a wonderful pregnancy of meaning and extraordinary fertility of association. Such was the magic, in the long ago, of "Vacation time." Those words, sounded now, unlock the treasure caves of the past and like Prospero's wand, compel the spirits of earth and air. As I repeat it to myself, the room seems to fill with a hundred strange creations and its windows open out upon a succession of vivid landscapes; the spirits, as of another world, troop in upon memory; the bloom of terraced gardens, which bask in glorious sunshine; serene heights, steeped in eternal summer; Sylvan bowers of enchantment; Arcadian landscapes and woodland glades, which ring with the music of nature; happy valleys, where the violet and wild rose are as deathless as the songs which celebrate them. All of these, and more, pass swiftly before the inner vision as we contemplate the quondam joys of "Vacation time." There is the old creek, with its tiny pools enlivened with sun perch, and its banks garlanded with reeds and rushes. There are the tireless notes of the thrush and bobolink,

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mingled with the crooning of the dove, or the notes of the quail. There is the old swimming pool, where the tireless hours of pleasure by day have been succeeded by sleepless hours of blistered and sunburnt backs. Again we see the brambles and sage fields, through which we chased the rabbits, and the bits of woodland where we hunted the chipmunk and the squirrel. Here is the grove of giant oaks, beneath the shade of which the picnics were held, and there the little embowered retreat, where we whispered first "the old sweet story."

It is only given to the chosen few to enjoy idleness, pure and simple, but the boy can do it. His is a busy idleness, in which he may strain his energies to avoid doing any sort of work. His vacation is considered a license, to follow his own sweet will, and to surfeit himself with what he calls a holiday. Whether following any of his multifold plans for riding, walking, sitting or sleeping; whether hunting, fishing, roving, or boating; whether berrying, nutting, bathing or trysting;—he wants to do it in his own way, without interference or suggestion. He has an ambition to be architect of his own pleasures. He is a natural enemy of the old adage about early rising. He believes, with Charles Lamb, that this is an egregious fallacy and that it is responsible for a great deal of folly.

For this same reason the boy is not always on good terms with the cock, who has a disagreeable habit of announcing the dawn.

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Among the ordinary pastimes of the vacation period, is that of gathering berries. It is a joy to the boy, that never grows old. Whatever changes the intellectual expansion of the ages may bring about in youth, the childhood of the twentieth century remains, in all essentials, the childhood of the centuries preceding it—just as buoyant and adventurous, as simple and as sportive. The bramble is as dear to the children now as it was to those of our colonial ancestors. The broad bosom of nature yields this luscious berry unstintedly, and to enjoy it wisely, you must, like the children, feast upon it when freshly gathered, with the cool dews of morning still clinging to it.

The berrying season is simultaneous, also with the hunt for huckleberries, haws and muscadines. In gathering the latter, some climbing and dexterity are called into play, and this lends an additional zest to the sport, as the boy is a "show off," when he has special opportunity to display agility and courage. I can readily recall how one of my schoolmates once broke up a delightful picnic excursion by such a display. He had climbed high into the tree, which was interlaced with muscadine vines, to bring down a large tempting cluster of the fruit, within reach of the group of boys and girls below. He made a long leap, grasped the vines, and brought them within four or five feet of the ground, and left himself there, swinging in mid air. To aid him in coming to the earth some of the crowd caught hold of his pantaloons, and drawing down upon them, his suspenders broke and—well,

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there was a quick dispersion of the picnic. Our obliging young friend was not seen for some weeks, and to the present day he doesn't appreciate any repetition of the incident.

This is also the season when the young idea receives first lessons in natural history, by personal contact with the birds, reptiles and insects, being a natural, uncompromising enemy to nearly all of the last two classes. He both fears and hates the spider, and for no well defined reason. There is little doubt that the ancient nursery rhyme about the spider and the fly, has much to do with this disfavor and antipathy. The fly is shown to be so unsuspecting a member of the insect fraternity, and the spider is so cunning a creature, that, at once, the popular verdict is rendered against him. In destroying these pestilential insects, the spider is a friend to humanity. Besides, it only obeys nature's laws in utilizing the means wherewith it has been provided for the capture of the flies.

The song of the bullfrog is a pleasing operetta to the young naturalist. There is something courageous—even inspiring—in his deep base tones, which we are taught to believe is an expression of joy. The bullfrog always essays his rôle after there has been an overture by the mosquitoes and katydids. It is only the male frog that sings and it is only to a select audience from his harem. The notes of the bullfrog are said to closely approximate

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to the Yale college yell, according to a distinguished French savant.

The snake, like the spider, is one of the special aversions of boyhood. In fact, the general disgust and fear with which the snake is universally regarded, exposes him to constant persecution, and perhaps no other reptile or animal in creation is so relentlessly sacrificed by him. He is hunted and killed by thousands every year, under the false idea that all are mean and venomous. Nevertheless snakes, as well as lizards and toads, are friends of the farmer, being the most formidable foes of leaf-destroying insects, as well as the small rodents, moles and worms that often play havoc with the early crops.

The toad, one of the most harmless of all God's creatures, is yearly slaughtered in pure, brutal sport. Being sluggish in its movements, it falls an easy victim, and is only saved from total extermination by being nocturnal in its habits. The fabled jewel in its head offered no incentive to its destruction. It is valuable in the agricultural districts as a destroyer of many varieties of pestiferous insects.

The chameleon also performs a similar office. He approaches the insect perched upon a twig, with an almost imperceptible slowness of action, until at the distance of a few inches, he shoots out his long slimy tongue and rarely fails to secure his victim. He thus contributes very materially and essentially in the reduction of the insect population.

But of all the cruel and destructive propensities

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of the boy that can be in no way justified is the yearly wanton slaughter of small birds. They are killed with guns, slings, and catapults, as well as by snares, traps and dead-falls, while the mother bird is driven from the nest and the eggs are destroyed. These same little birds are not only harmless, but court man's friendship by nesting near his dwelling and greeting him with a song, being also his self-appointed protectors. They affect vegetation directly by sowing seeds and consuming them; by destroying injurious insects, and, in some cases are beneficial to vegetable life. Hence, when we kill a seed-sowing bird we check the dissemination of a plant, and when we kill a bird which digests the seeds it swallows, we promote the increase of vegetation, possibly noxious.

There are many birds whose habitat is the open plain, and the treeless marshes and moors. Thus exposed to their enemies, the hawks, they could not maintain an existence, without special means of escape or concealment. Nature, therefore, comes to their assistance and supplies them sombre and deceptive colorings, as is observed in wrens, thrushes, quail and snipe. These birds, whose habitat is the forest, contrary to the general idea, are seldom seen in its deepest recesses, but along the border, where their insect prey are most accessible. A peculiarity, often noted in our childhood, was the almost universal law of nature which give the most startling and gaudiest plumage to the male bird. This is perhaps a most wise and beneficent provision, as the drab colors and som-

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bre coating of the female, partly secure her immunity from molestation during the generative season.

We cannot avoid repeating here that the passion of boyhood for the ruthless and indiscriminate destruction of the birds, furnishes a cruel record, which is among the most discreditable pages of juvenile life. It is no worse, however, than the ravages committed by their elders, who are responsible for the almost total extinction of the buffalo, chamois, moose, tapir, walrus and sea-cow, as well as many gaudy plumaged birds.

Every boy is familiar with the large family of beetles, embracing the pinch-bug, jack-snapper, black-runners, devil's horse, June-bugs, locusts, fire-flies, etc. They are part of the daily life of childhood, and have many times engaged their undivided, if not loving attention. The vicious and voracious wolf-beetle, which burrows in the ground, is so swift and active in movement that they capture their prey with facility, usually caterpillars and tree-destroying insects. The devil's horse, a most repulsive creature, is afraid of nothing and will attack a man's legs and feet if he draws near. The jack-snapper has that power of tenacity of life, that it will bite after the head has been severed from the body. The locust or cicada, whose loud shrill note can be heard for a mile, is one of the plagues of agriculture in his migratory visits. He is regarded as a palatable morsel by the Chinese in different parts of the country.

The cockroach has ever been a nuisance, with his

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disagreeable odor and predatory habits. The firefly and the glow worm embellish the nights of summer with innumerable moving lights, and would seem to repeat on earth the brilliancy of the starry vault of heaven. There is also the stinging-scorpion, which has been immortalized by astronomy to represent one of the constellations. He has an acute sting, which effuses a venomous liquid that is very painful. This is one creature the small boy is justified in hunting and destroying.

These boyish rambles over meadow and field are alike healthful and profitable in expanding the mind, and listening to and imbibing all the lore of nature. Not only in the fields but in the barnyard, this information can be gleaned, as it is where the involuntary education of the naturalist begins.

Over there, on the border of the clover patch, a group of consequential hens are holding a reception. They have put their heads together and are indulging in a sort of sign language. A dandy rooster is parading before them, displaying his shape, and, by a sort of churling sound is calling Mrs. Dominica aside for a brief talk. That wood pigeon, who is describing a series of graceful aerial evolutions and alighting, with puffing breast, on the old limb near another, is simply making love to its mate. That flock of guineas that have just mounted the old rail fence have missed some of their covey, and are loudly calling "come back—come back." That old catbird, who continues to say "wot, wot—tway," has a nest

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thereabout and she is resenting your proximity to same. "Fido," who has been teasing and snapping at that little toad has suddenly desisted and is now showing every sign of nausea, because he has a taste of the "sweat venom" emitted from the toad's skin. And so this study could be pursued indefinitely, even down to the ants, wood lice, grubs and larval forms, but our space does not admit of any further extension of this feature of the subject. The boy has other pleasures and diversions to follow.

At the verdant period of life, which we are now recording, the boy at one time or another keeps a diary. It is a private record, which he guards as he does the precious missives from his sweetheart. A diary is supposed to be composed every night, with the same regularity as plans are made for the next day's sport and recreation. Nothing of consequence is supposed to be omitted, and nothing set down in malice. Most of these diaries with which I was acquainted (and I had one myself) were not made up for the boy's exclusive perusal, as he always had deep hued, loving expressions for his sweetheart, which he secretly hoped that she could read by some chance, without his knowledge of the fact. There is also the record of the marbles lost and won and the prospect of some glorious epidemic closing the school, the intense hatred of rivals, the death of animals on the farm, the loss of a pocket knife, prospective parties and candy pullings and many other inmost secrets, which, for the time, were really momentous.

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Just about this period, too, it may be said that the autograph album had its birth in literature. They came out in handsome bindings, with some sentimental title in gilt letters on the back, such as "The Keepsake," "Forget-me-not," "Autumn Leaves," "The Bijou," etc. The young people simply revelled in them, as affording an opportunity of openly writing sweet and loving sentiments which were fully authorized by fashion. When a young man got hold of his best girl's album he sat down to look through all the poets and writers of sentiment for something appropriate to say. It often required days to accomplish this and, when the album was returned, he had poured all the fire of his soul upon one of its pages. He had eclipsed anything said by any writer therein who had preceded him. This fad for autograph albums, with some minor changes, is one that has shown great tenacity, as the custom has never yet been discontinued.

Gypsies also contained a strange fascination for boys, which probably arose from the old-time custom of this race stealing and "mixing" children, as well as their ability for stealing horses. But the modern gypsy, from a romantic point of view, has fallen, of late years, from his high estate; they have ceased to kidnap children of great and rich people to substitute for them offspring of their own. This falling off in a good old custom has taken from our novel lists a time-honored plot, which never failed to work like a charm. If a story-teller should now

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hint at his hero being "changed at birth," he would be overwhelmed with ridicule. "Little Buttercup" was the last personage to engage successfully in this line of business, and with her, baby-farming became extinct.

There has ever been a singular affection, on the part of southern children for the old negroes, and especially for the old "Black Mammy," who has had as much to do with their rearing as mother and father. The negro is filled, too, with superstition, which is always an intensely interesting subject to a child. The religion of the darkey is also of an austere, if not fierce character and to the child mind this possesses an absorbing interest. During their religious revivals of long ago (as well as at the present time) the services were marked by many exciting scenes, such as shouting, holy trances, holy dances and other fierce and fervent exhibitions of religious feeling. At such times the boys would steal away from home at night and spend many hours as interested on-lookers upon the strange scenes.

The negro also is a happy-go-lucky individual, in his normal state, easily contented, and wholly oblivious of the morrow. He is a disciple of hoecake and hominy, and about as near an approach to perfect happiness as can be found this side of paradise. No matter where he is toiling, or how arduous his task, you invariably find him singing at his work. If possessed of a day's rations, and a plug of tobacco, he

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apparently would not change places with Cræsus himself.

In the old days he was the hero of a most interesting feature of plantation life—the “corn shuckings.” Such gatherings were common before the Civil war, and furnished a rich fund of amusement to the casual sojourner in the country. A great heap of corn in the shuck would be piled in the back yard, and on a stipulated night the negroes from all surrounding plantations would gather here, in a prize contest, to see who would shuck the greatest amount of corn. There was usually a liberal flow of whiskey, and often a substantial meal was served about the middle of the evening. Some good singer was selected to lead all the others—often forty or so—who would join in the song, which could be distinctly heard for miles away. These exercises were sometimes varied with solos, quartettes and dancing, to the music of a superannuated banjo—the favorite musical instrument of the darkey. Such gatherings were always hilarious and exciting, being repeated many times during the season, on different plantations.

A similar gathering was often held in the fall, when fresh forests had been felled, and there occurred what was known as a “log-rolling” on the new ground. These occasions were always marked by a tempestuous flow of good spirits and formed a glorious era in plantation life, which has no counterpart in modern times.

Another feature of that old-time period of boyhood life is now an almost extinct occupation, but

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there are still those who can remember the pleasures of an old-time "quilting." For the small boy the quilting features were a side issue, as it was the specially-prepared dinner that possessed the leading charm for him. These gatherings were a special feature prior to the Civil war time and before the sewing machine invaded every home and banished the elaborate quilts that were so common in those days, as marvels of fine needlework. There is no relic of our grandmother's time that can compare with the dainty and handsome spreads, which are the precision and perfection of careful stitching as well as a wonder of patience and skill.

Out of this epoch comes back the memory of the old-fashioned corn bread, made from the antiquated skillet and from meal ground in the slow rollers of the ante-bellum grist mill. There was no more palatable, wholesome, nutritious bread in the world. Made properly, eaten hot or cold with milk and butter, or without, it is an enemy to dyspepsia, a lasting invitation to the palate and a joy forever. A similar verdict can be rendered in favor of the collard, after it has been sweetened and mellowed by the first frost. The secret of its proper preparation and boiling is almost unknown, except in the South. There is nothing more delicious, and any stomach can digest it.

And what master of the culinary art can vie with Black Mammy in the preparation of that toothsome dish, "possum and 'taters"? There are those who may decry the virtue of this rich, juicy and palatable

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dish, but they are the uninitiated, who would only have to taste to bless the inventor. Let those who will, continue to make "possum and 'taters" the subject of ironical geographical lectures, it has won its place, at least, in the heart of the small boy, and for all time will be an everlasting joy to Uncle Remus.

The camp meeting, in its truest glory, belongs to the period of thirty years ago. This peculiarly American institution has its origin from the gregarious instinct of the unconventional and emotional followers of John Wesley. One of these great periodical gatherings took place within a few miles of the home of my childhood, and was famous in those days for the numbers who yearly assembled there from adjoining counties, and the intense religious enthusiasm which was awakened. The camp ground was located in the deep recesses of the forest, the people came and lived in tents, and a vast arbor was constructed in the center as the temple. It was the combination of the purposes of summer recreation with those of mental and spiritual culture, and if the seductions of the flesh and the devil sometimes creep insidiously into these temples of Nature, we must only regard them as due to the casual imperfections of human nature.

But the modern Methodists have become more artificial and luxurious in their tastes, and the campgrounds have lost most of the crude and archaic simplicity of former days. It is only in the method of

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preaching in the open air that there is now any exact similarity to the primitive habit.

The only denomination which has preserved the many old-time characteristics of the camp meeting, are the Primitive Baptists, otherwise known as the "Hard Shell Baptists." These religionists are most rigorous too in their discipline and, in many features, approximate to the early Puritans. They were numerous in the rural districts about our early home, and noted for their strict and even fierce piety. Many of their precepts could be most profitably emulated by other denominations. They are unalterably opposed to every species of extravagance, and communion bread would be refused to any man, who refused or failed to pay his debts. They are opposed to war under any pretext, and like the Quakers, were exempt from participating in our fratricidal Civil war.

We now move on apace, from Summer and Autumn, leaving behind the balmy breath of Indian Summer, the Equinoxes of September, for the season of holly and mistletoe, when vegetation has gone to sleep, and the frosty mornings usher in that ever-to-be-remembered era of "hog-killing-time." To the boy, whose heart you can reach through his stomach, this is an epoch of stupendous importance. When he sees the great wooden box, filled with water, being encased in the earth and a huge fire of logs, upon which are being superheated the large gneissoid rocks, which are to bring the water, in the box, to a boiling

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point, he realizes what it means. His dreams turn to pork in thirty different languages—the chitterlings, cracklings, lights, livers, sausage, souse, and a score of other parts and forms that are to be obtained at no other period. Though the taste may have undergone a radical change since that time and the aversion to pork in all forms be most pronounced, it nevertheless cannot rob this ancient era of the glorious expectations it once awakened.

Parental injunctions against vulgar or harrowing sights, and against many unnamable things, which were more or less incomprehensible, always acted as a stimulus. They first provoked astonishment, then curiosity, and finally, a desire to explore and find out just why it is something that shouldn't be seen. It was thus with the first judicial execution that took place in my native county, in early childhood. The scene was awful, and is still harrowing, when recalled by memory.

Though strictly prohibited from attending, the sight of the grewsome procession passing, with a number of my playmates following, aroused a strange fancy to see the hanging. The unfortunate who was to be publicly strangled, sat on his own coffin in the wagon, which was flanked on either side by platoons of militia. These were followed by the executioner, deputy sheriffs, preacher, mourners and a heterogeneous crowd of whites and blacks. A vast concourse of men, women and children lined the streets, with a maudlin curiosity to see the strange and mournful cor-

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tege, which was slowly moving to an old field on the outskirts of the village, where the gallows had been erected. Only a few preliminaries were indulged at the scaffold, a pathetic prayer, a weird chant, suppressed sobbing, and then the trap was sprung. In falling the victim's black cap was accidentally pulled from his face and the ghastly sight which met my eyes caused me to run away in horror and terror. It hung to me like some loathsome torment—like some tenacious and unutterable nightmare and, to this day, after the lapse of thirty-five years, it rises like a Gorgon from the past.

November and December are months more or less discredited, as they are largely characterized by cold, chilly rains, fogs, mists, and gloom. And yet, they have claims for the boy, who is not so sensitive to the variations of weather as his elders. It is the time when garnered grain adds new colonies to the rodents, and with the terriers and mongrels the boy finds endless pleasure in chasing and killing the rats. The crispy, frosty mornings are also inviting for rabbit hunting, and behind a pack of hunting dogs (sometimes trained hounds) he rushes over the fields and through the swamps with a wild glee known only to those of his age. And the delicious "wine saps" which still hang in the orchard are a princely feast for him when he returns from the chase, braced, exhilarated and glowing with gracious warmth. There is also a barrel of genuine sweet cider, made by experts, which he can imbibe to his heart's content, with

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out any fear of evil results. In fact, the frost and chilliness of this season has endless compensations, and really warms the enthusiasm of those who love activity, and who would gain health and recreation afield.

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CHAPTER VII.

Anniversaries, Eras, Holidays, Etc.

It is sometimes pleasant to realize that every day is an anniversary. The world has been in existence so long that no day passes over our heads that does not record the completion of a year more or less important to somebody, somewhere. Now it is a mighty nation, celebrating its independence, the jubilee of a reign, the birth of a great statesman, or mourning over a deceased president; now, it is an humble and obscure individual, rejoicing or lamenting over memories to which the exact round of a life gives a significant vividness. Between these two high and low extremes, every class of humanity is almost hourly touched by those recollections of the past, which are brought conspicuously to the mind by the lapse of twelve months. And so we go on annually, month to month, and day to day, all and every one of them bringing back a well-defined span of time, to be again renewed and carried on until yet another year is completed.

By the young, these recurrent dates are looked forward to eagerly, and on them they make a deep impression, more especially because they are generally

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signalized by a cessation of study or labor. The time comes a little later (and only too soon) when we get startled by the rapidity with which we find such anniversaries turning up and are made a little bit uneasy by the realization that we are growing older and older. It is then that the repetition of these dates becomes a little tiresome, and we cease to look forward to them with any pleasurable sensations, and finally disregard them, to such an extent that they are almost forgotten. At least, we will try to forget them, and almost resent any reminder of the fact as unnecessary and obtrusive.

But, with the boy, it is altogether different, as he is always looking forward and the more years he can place behind him, the more it rejoices his heart. It is little wonder, therefore, that the birthdays of the young, with all they include, are conspicuous and paramount among anniversaries. After our own natal day has been celebrated, the next in importance is that of a brother, sister, parent or friend, each carrying with it its due observance and relative amount of pleasure, presents and fun.

The year opens with an anniversary, the birth of the New Year. Cynics may make light of it, and remind us that every day is the beginning of another year, and treat us with the truism that all days are alike, but we remain convinced that it is not so—that tradition and association have invested, with a special and almost pathetic interest, the New Year's day of the calendar. Nature herself seems to mark it out

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as a kind of turning point in her increasing activity, to distinguish it as a boundary between two periods of obviously distinct character. The boy welcomes it, not only as one of his jewelled holidays, but for all of its annual concomitants, such as big dinners, presents, good cheer and recreations. And with elevated soul, softened heart and a full stomach, he looks upon the day as one of the many benedictions the Creator has showered upon us.

And there is St. Valentine's day, with all of its sweet associations as well as its unnumbered and hallowed memories. What a stir of expectancy fluttered in thousands of young hearts when that consecrated morning dawned. How restlessly and impatiently we waited for the village postoffice to open, and how we almost crawled over each other in anxiety at the delivery window. The precious missives sometimes contained printed verses, of appropriate sentiment, but to these were often appended some more convincing terms of endearment, in the timid scrawl of the sender. They were always a source of infinite joy, and it is almost lamentable that the lovely traditions of the festival of St. Valentine have dwindled into burlesque and caricatures. All sorts of things imaginable and unimaginable now pass through the mails as valentines. Newly married couples are inundated with gentle reminders of squalling babies; bachelors have also appropriate reminders, while men who drink, or are addicted to staying out at nights, are mercilessly pelted with all sorts of

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caricatures and doggerel verses. In fact, the desecration of the day has become such a burlesque that the character of a large mass of the valentines is extremely odious and at times revolting.

Another event of importance to the juvenile occurs simultaneously with St. Valentine, and that is the appearance of the prophetic ground hog. Some controversy has always prevailed as to the exact time when this interesting little creature awakes from his winter siesta and takes a peep at the outside world. Many contend that this first appearance is made on Candlemas day, but those who are experts in the color of the goose bone and its hardness, as well as the disciples of "gander pulling" place the date unmistakably on February 14th, corresponding with the festival of St. Valentine. On this day the ground hog rises from his long hibernation, stretches his limbs, creeps to his front door cautiously and looks searchingly around to ascertain if he can see his own shadow. If he should see it he goes back to sleep and comes out again in exactly one month. But if he fails to see his shadow, instinct tells him that the winter is over, and he remains above ground and busies himself, as do many other people on St. Valentine's, in trying to find a mate and set up housekeeping during the summer. There are some mongrel ground hogs who would desecrate the tradition of their forefathers by coming out on February 2d, but they do not belong to the upper crust of ground hog society.

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A moment's thought will explain the instinct why he does not remain out if he can see his own shadow. He knows the sun must be shining, and this argues that light weather has come out prematurely, and will probably be followed by storms and blizzards. But if "arctomy's monax" cannot see his shadow, he knows that the next day and those which follow, will be light, and he will be justified in marrying on the Saint's day and going to housekeeping.

There is a singular coincidence in the second appearance of the ground hog, if he goes back to sleep, as he makes no account of the shortness of February, but reappears on March 17th, known all over the world as St. Patrick's day. The sons of Erin revere the memory of this blessed saint, for his noble effort in reclaiming their forefathers from paganism, as well as banishing snakes from Ireland, and his decree that the shamrock would grow to perfection in the Emerald Isle, and on no other spot on earth. His natal day is unknown, but the date of his advent in Ireland is recognized by religious and civic demonstrations in every part of the world, by the Celtic race. "The wearing of the green" is the badge and song of this occasion, as well as the symbolic harp, which "Once through Tara's halls, its soul of music shed."

The custom of keeping April 1st as "All Fool's day," as a day set aside for all kinds of practical jokes, is a very old one, and the custom is very nearly universal, as all nations have such a day, which is kept in very much the same manner. It is a great occa-

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sion for the juveniles to indulge their favorite proclivity for practical jokes, in which they are often joined by their elders. One of the favorite jests is to send some one upon an errand, which no one but a fool would undertake; as for instance, to get a "set of hen teeth," or "a quart of pigeon milk," or to buy "The story of Adam's grandfather." This is varied sometimes by more serious joking in sending a man home hurriedly to see a sick family, or calling the doctor hastily (nowadays by telephone) to go to some unknown number. Under such circumstances it seems legitimate to laugh, especially when quiet and inoffensive men are duped to go upon such silly errands. The observance of the day is possibly the survival of some old heathen custom, for that is the origin of nearly all of our old customs, particularly such as may be common to all countries.

Along with numerous church festivals, which occur during the month of April, the 26th of the month is set aside as Confederate Memorial Day, in several of the Southern states. At this time all school exercises are suspended and the whole village population gather at the graveyard to strew the graves with flowers and hold appropriate exercises, commemorative of the deeds of valor performed by the dead.

But the greatest of festivals, so far as childhood is concerned, is "May Day." It is one of the oldest eras in the history of the world, dating back among the mythic epochs of human career. It has its origin from that time when men personified the powers of

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nature and called them gods and goddesses. All of the earliest records speak of the spring festival, when the earth puts on her green mantle, with its floral spangles of every hue. It is the month of flowers and birds—the month of dewy freshness, of genial, unresting youth and of expanding beauty. What glorious dreams are recalled by those unalloyed pleasures, associated with strawberry festivals, the May pole dances and the crowning of the Queen of May. It is one of the supreme epochs of child life, and has such vitality, after all the changes of generations and ages, that it never grows old.

Easter is another festival, though of a religious character, which has its origin from the Resurrection. Like St. Valentine's and New Year's, it has certain significant observances among children, which renders it memorable, and a time to which they look forward with most pleasurable anticipations. Easter eggs, of beautiful hues, are prepared for the smaller children, while the older ones indulge their fancies for handsome Easter cards, with appropriate poetical inscriptions. Among the loveliest Easter gifts are gorgeous floral designs of roses and lilies, and other spring blossoms suitable to the spirit of the hour. The Easter gift, unlike that of Christmas, has not degenerated into such a perfunctory and empty-hearted practice, but the dainty and original fancies displayed seem to have the inspiration of genuine affection.

The festivals of the Annunciation of the Virgin (Lady Day) and that of the Feast of the Nativity

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of John the Baptist (June 24th) are church days strictly observed in England, but seldom celebrated in this country. The same may be said of St. Swithin's, about which there is a superstition that if rain fell on this day (July 15th) it would continue for forty days.

But the day of days for celebrating, in the old times, was Independence Day—July 4th. This always presented to young America a license and opportunity for noisy and boisterous fun, not afforded upon any other anniversary of the year. Outside of his lusty lungs, his weapons of noise were Chinese firecrackers, miniature torpedoes, toy pistols and cannon, besides many other improvised and home-made designs and devices, with which to banish all peace and create pandemonium.

One of these consisted in filling a bottle with blasting powder, attaching a fuse and burying it on some prominent hill top, and when the unsuspecting neighborhood was least aware, touching off the minimized volcano, with its deafening report. A cruel practice was to catch some confiding, unwary country cur and attach a pack of firecrackers to its tail and set them off. It is doubtful if any dog ever develops such wonderful speed as upon these occasions, since he can cover the distance to his rural home, ten miles away, in a space of time that has given rise to the expression of "burning the wind."

The period of school closing, exhibitions and commencements, is generally ushered in with

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the summer solstice, and is fraught with deathless interest to the young, as it signalizes the approach of that time of restful indolence, the summer vacation. In these days, the air is filled with oratory and compositions, when the youthful optimists, with most assuring confidence, easily dispose of problems which have troubled the wise men of all ages. Optimism is necessarily one of the traits of youth, as it is the time when the pulse beats strong, and the eye does not yet look far beyond the surface. Friendships are still unmarred by blighting selfishness and all the world still retains its brightest hues. In the opinion of the average boy, schools were invented merely as a kind of strait-jacket, and he is convinced that he will not have occasion to make use of the numerous things he must learn. With the girls, commencement day is also connected with gifts of dresses and flowers, and draw so many flattering remarks from friends as to inspire the wish that it might last forever.

The summer vacation usually encompasses the period known as "Dog Days," from the supposed influence of that heated period upon these animals, causing them occasionally to develop symptoms of madness. There is no terror of childhood greater than that of the appearance of a supposed mad dog. It is one of the ogres of the imagination, which perpetuates among boys some of the most frightful stories of the doings of these animals, under the influence of rabies, and the sufferings of those who have been

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bitten. The appearance of a dog upon the street foaming at the mouth, because of inability to swallow its saliva, was always the signal for general scampering, as wild and precipitate as any stampede that ever characterized a western herd. It has been established scientifically that neither climate nor heat has anything to do with hydrophobia, as it is as common in winter as in summer, while the fear of water is a pure myth.

It has been the custom for a long period of time for the President to appoint a certain day—generally the last Thursday in November—for Thanksgiving for all and special beneficences of the Creator. In the old days, as in modern years, this was observed by services and prayers in the churches, succeeded by an extensive and specially prepared dinner in every home, where roast turkey and cranberry sauce constituted the leading, if not symbolic, course of the meal. In the country districts there was also a small roast pig, served whole, trimmed with spinach, and holding a red apple in its mouth. It is useless to add that this was an occasion for the delectation of boyhood, as are all occasions where plenty of something good to eat is a prominent feature.

A very pretty custom has come down to us from the Scotch traditions and folk-lore in "All Hallow Eve," or, as it is anglicized into "Halloween." In the church calendar, it is known as "All Saints' Day," and occurs on November 1st. Among young people the observance is confined to the preceding evening,

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or Hallow Eve, and it is marked by many customs that have their origin in the remotest periods. The germ of the old halloween fancy is that you will on that night, through some means, ascertain your future wife or husband. Even the features can be determined, by invoking certain charms—looking into the burning grate, casting an apple peel over the right shoulder, or watching for a mystic face reflected over the shoulder in the pool. In fact the fancies are innumerable that are indulged on Halloween, nearly every country and section having different customs of observance.

But the greatest anniversary of the year, and the one which is so far reaching as to find an echo in every part of the world, is Christmas. It is the season of holly and mistletoe, which are inseparable from the advent of Yule.

A beautiful Spanish legend tells us that during the night of the Nativity, there was no darkness in Spain, as a glorious, luminous cloud, bright as the sun, shone over the exultant land. It is thus that child life is lighted up by each resurrection of this event, with all of its glorious promise of joys and happiness. It is then that the heart seems to open its most generous impulses and to shower its gifts upon those bound to it by ties of love and friendship. The insignificant mementoes of even the very poor are treasures, and seem to have a broader significance at this time. And there is Santa Claus, the Christmas tree, the presents, the flowers, the fireworks, the grand

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dinners, and all the multiform accompaniments of this season of unalloyed happiness. It is scarcely faded from view before the young hearts begin their longing for its next return. It is ever thus to the young, to whom the years are so many caskets of jewels and precious stones, while to the old, they are the beads of Time's rosary, which drop from our fingers even while we count them.

Of other events which occur annually, but at no fixed time, might be mentioned candy-pullings, pound-parties, eclipses, movable church feasts, marriages, deaths and funerals. Each of them possesses an interest of more or less importance in boy life, as his personality, in some shape or form, is almost essentially a part of every important event of the world.

If there is an eclipse, he is first on the scene with a smoked glass to take a view of it, while he is actually a symbol in some of the church feasts.

At the marriage feasts, he sometimes "gives the bride away," in a figurative sense, while no one is so capable of doing justice to the bridal supper as our ever-present "Angel of the House."

At the death bed he is called to receive the last parental blessing, and at the grave he is one of the most pathetic features of the orphaned family.

There are still other miscellaneous events of each year which play some part in childhood, and which also have fixed dates, but these will be treated in another part of this work.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Other Concomitants of Boyhood.

ON the very threshold of this new and advanced era of boyhood, I propose to take the side of the boy, in an assault upon one of the proverbial heirlooms and platitudes, consecrated in copy books, as "Perseverance overcomes every difficulty." We have lived long enough under the tyranny of this alleged truism, and it is time for the crushed worm to turn and assert itself. To be sure, it is never an easy task to strike from the tortured limbs the fetters of tradition, and the shackles of association, but this is an age which makes short work with old creeds, cults and fallacies, when emancipation applies with proper credentials. By the despotism of such phrases and proverbs we were pelted mercilessly in youth. They not only glared at us from copy books, but grinned menacingly in the almanac. The grim phantom haunted us in compositions, while it cropped up in the Latin grammar, "*Perseverantia Omnia Vincit*," and if a silver medal came at Christmas, this delusive legend was engraved on the back of it. Our elders gravely quoted it when giving us advice, and great names were trotted out, who had become Cræsus through acting upon this adage.

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Gradually it dawned upon every young mind that there was a fallacy somewhere—that the proverb and the result did not co-ordinate. In the first place, our worthy mentors, it was not to be doubted, had strenuously cultivated the habit they so emphatically recommended—and yet perseverance had not **showered** upon *them* the “Fat of the Land,” nor thrust *their* heads into tiaras. And if the maxim failed in their case, why might it not fail in ours? Then again, we read that a great many persons had devoted a lifetime of arduous effort in various things, and yet had *persevered* themselves into nothing better than premature graves and lunatic asylums—so that the difficulties had not been overcome, but had rather overcome the unfortunates themselves. We felt inclined to shed a tear over their tombs, apprehending that a similar fate would surely be ours if we tried our hands at inventing, creating, or other great undertakings, with nothing better than perseverance to back us up. Speaking for myself, I feel bound to say that these sad conclusions of our boyhood have been confirmed by the experience of later years. I do not believe one whit in this proverbial philosophy of our ancestors—at least this specimen of it. To believe some of our moralists and writers for the young, one would suppose that perseverance was the “open sesame” which unlocks every Ali Baba cave—the magic carpet, which whisks its owner up to shining heights and airy palaces. It is all a delusion. Pluck may do a good deal, patience more and brains more than

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either, or both, but perseverance—pshaw! There never was a more idiotic story, out of a Christmas annual, than that of Robert Bruce and the spider, and yet this is a favorite illustration with our moral philosophers. "Try, Try Again," is an apt alliterative phrase, but the chances are that what a man cannot do at first, he will not do at the second, and time is too valuable a commodity to be expended in endeavors to attain the unattainable.

And while engaged in this assault upon these ancient adages, there was another that was preached to us in boyhood, which is not fully verified in the ordinary world. We were always taught that "civility costs nothing," and would prove a most practical virtue in our contact with the world. There is reason to question this alleged axiom. It has, no doubt, been of great advantage to some people—to Sir Walter Raleigh, for instance—and to the gentleman who gave up his seat in church to the old lady unknown, who made him her heir in consequence. Raleigh could probably never wear his cloak again, and though many people may be willing to give us their seats in church and go away, if this polite person had to stand for the rest of the service he could not have liked it. Sometimes civility costs a great deal; it may introduce you to a pickpocket, or what is worse, and what has frequently happened to us, introduce you to the most audacious bores. Furthermore, it may compel you to recognize somebody whom someone else knows to be questionable, or it may innocently

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lead to your being blackmailed for the balance of your life. Still, there may be a happy medium somewhere, in this contact with strangers, which can redeem the old adage and save civility from such consequences.

There is still another class of these would-be philosophers, whom, for the want of a better name, we will call Anti-Everythingarians. They are in constant evidence in the outside world, but we only address them, at this time, in-so-far as they affect boyhood, with their abstruse theories and prohibitions. These Anti-Everythingarians turn the whole science of dietetics topsy-turvy and find those hideous looking germs in all that we eat and drink, while they people the air we breathe with deadly sporae, which assault the vitals, as soon as they are drawn into the lungs. They would banish stoves from the house, as generating death-dealing gases, and leave all windows open, in winter, to kill off the rapidly-breeding infusoria. They find frightful results in spinal-curvature from bicycles, while base ball and foot ball are interdicted as being an unerring return to savagery. They warn people against assembling in public halls, on account of impure air; they oppose all systems of education, find disease in kissing, death in smoking, immorality in dancing and the world in general going, at a rapid pace, to the "demnition bow-wows." Almost every morning there is something added to their "Index Prohibitorium," and with breathless anticipation we await each new edict to find

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that some common, everyday thing has been slaughtering humanity for the last four thousand years.

Now, boys don't believe one per cent. of what these humbugs announce, but their elders do, and the boy is made to suffer, while he inwardly prays for some dire calamity to sweep away this colony of cranks who are now feasting on the world's credulity. In olden times, we were afflicted with witch-burning Puritanism, which really had some backbone, but now we have an invertebrate asceticism, inspired solely by egotism and the love of notoriety, whose sole object seems to be the diminution of human enjoyment.

There is a most singular similarity in the habits, aims, purposes and ambitions of boyhood, which gives force to the idea that our moral and physical proclivities come by heredity. Smoking is among the first habits contracted by a boy after he reaches twelve or thirteen years of age, and you will be surprised, upon investigation, to find that the father of ninety per cent. of such boys also smokes. It is not an easy habit to acquire, as the novitiate is subjected to frequent spells of nausea before he finally conquers the weed. Every boy could give some interesting experiences of his first combat with a cigar, and though the stomach invariably revolts, at the outset, he is persistent, and rarely leaves off after once making a beginning. Tobacco, like religion, has had its persecutions, since all the anathemas of the decalogue have been hurled against it. In the early

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part of the seventeenth century a Turk was conducted through the streets of Constantinople, mounted backward, on an ass, with a tobacco pipe driven through the cartilage of his nose, for the crime of smoking. And yet, in the same century, it was the custom in England for children to take a pipe of tobacco to school, as it was supposed to stand them in lieu of breakfast. At the usual hour they laid aside their books and took up the pipe, the master smoking with them and showing them how to wield the pipe gracefully. To this day, little Dutch boys, five and seven years old, use the pipe. The small boy smoking cigarettes belongs to a recent period, and this method of smoking is considered deleterious. Some years ago a Boston boarding house advertised:

“Wanted:—Four Christian young men,
who neither chew, smoke, spit nor swear.”

But it was certainly a moral impossibility to find such a wonderful combination. If the applicant did not chew, he smoked; and if he did not spit, he swore; and if he did not swear, he “chawed”; and if he did not chew, spit nor swear, he was no Christian, and therefore would not fill the bill.

The use of slang begins in boyhood, and though the vocabulary was not so extended thirty-five or forty years ago, there was enough in use, at that time, to almost form a dialect by itself. No doubt the American neologist owes much to Indian associations, as

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well as new habits in a new land, but a very large portion of the reputed Americanisms originated in the mother country of England. Even the peculiar drawl of the Yankee was brought over in the Mayflower from North England, where the same method of speech prevails to this day. Still, there are a multitude of slang terms and phrases which are indigenous and have sprung up to supply the ever-increasing demand for variety. Though it has tainted the purity of the language, many of these words have become indispensable and are now sanctioned by the best usage. Some slang words, too, which were in general use, four decades ago, are now seldom heard.

Such words as "absquatulate," "shinplaster," "oodles," "galluses," "shebang," "scalawag," "lan-bast," "spondulix," and many others, which did much service in their day, are now seldom heard. Playing marbles in those days were designated "allies," "sweeps," "fates," and "agates," and to "get shet," of your "taw," was an indication you were "broke," in playing "winnunce." The different marble games were "hull," "sweepstakes," "ring," "line," "plump," and "knucks," some of which still survive, while others are now obsolete. There are many other slang words which ought to die, as they are worthless to the language, but many of them somehow show great tenacity of life. "Cissy-boys," were those gawky louts, who were not only cowards, but would blubber at the slightest provocation. Another term for them was

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"Cry-babies," both of which were synonymous with the English "Willie-boys." In those days, for an outsider to pass by the school and yell out "school-butter," was construed as a gross insult, and severe punishments were sometimes meted out to such an offender. Slang words applied to obscene and vulgar uses, were perhaps more numerous than in any other department. With slang, as with other words, there is a perpetual war for existence, and it is the "survival of the fittest."

There is a proneness on the part of the boy, at times, to magnify insignificant things and he will often clothe the most ordinary affairs with the grossest exaggeration. With him the merest pin-prick expands into a wound "as wide as a church door." Some petty vexation ruffles his self-esteem, such as a "tiff" with his sweetheart, and he proceeds to nurse it and brood over it—to aggravate and irritate it until his mere pin-prick becomes a permanent sore. This is not an uncommon trait of boyhood, and though far from being universal, is all the more to be deplored, as it is the beginning of much trouble in after life. Such little worries seem to wear out the energies of the youthful soul. It is, in this way, that cynics and satirists are made, and selfish pseudo-philosophers, who are always railing at the life which is much too large and beautiful for them to understand. Many times, too, a boy's small cares will arise from self-consciousness, envies and covetousness, which unfortunate traits are often developed early in life, and unless checked, go

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on doing their damage for the balance of his days. It is sad to see youth in such bondage, for here again comes in the question of hereditary traits—a thrall-dom from which it seems hard to escape.

Regarding heredity, there seems often to be an anomaly in the inheritance of physical and moral traits, while there will be but a feeble reproduction of intellectual traits, on one hand, or a brilliant and startling intellectual creation, that surpasses all ancestral progenitors, on the other hand. In that group of boys, playing together over there, with eyes brimful of joy, and hearts playing upon their faces—like sunshine upon clear waters—you observe the blossoms of the future—the roses and the thorns—unselfish statesmen and heartless anarchist; the steadfast and the weak; judge and criminal—murderer and executioner. The silent forces of heredity are at work in each little breast—“chips from the old block”—the fruition of a strain of blood crossing its span of life. Children are the elements of the hereafter made visible. Corrupted, they are fountains of bitterness for ages. What children are, neighborhoods are; what neighborhoods are, communities are—states, empires, worlds. You can study the future with a spirit of prophecy through these same young creatures. Some of them are warm, generous, docile and confiding—the future hope of the world. Others are crafty, mean, indomitable as the young of wild beasts, as well as treacherous and cruel, the future malcontents, marplots and anarchists. The philosophers have been

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struggling with the question of design in nature ever since the days of Aristotle. But she holds and guards her secret, and the honest truth is forced upon us, that it is impossible to discern a moral end in nature and her laws of heredity, without recourse to religion. She goes on producing and reproducing types, that simply perpetuate evil and malevolence, and instead of our trying to put ourselves in harmony with her designs, it were better to combat them with the most courageous resistance we can command.

The pride of ancestry early possesses the boy, and he becomes a great stickler for any and everything connected with his family and relations. He has not sufficiently studied his genealogical table, like a certain Welsh family, which could establish an unbroken line from Noah, but he has been told enough at home, about his ancestors, to know they were "blue-blood," even if no coat-of-arms has been preserved among the family heirlooms. It is a source of greater pride to the boy if his father was ennobled and enrolled among those immortals who first cleared away the virgin forests of his native county and is now a "prominent citizen." The distinction, in a small town, falls to the lot of the one whose keen business tactics has enabled him to accumulate a competence. He is simply great because those around him are small, while his progeny become the leaders in all that pertains to social life to the town. His boys wear better clothes at school, have more and better things to eat, carry the best pen-knives, the finest tops and the

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costliest marbles; they enjoy especial attentions from the teacher, who recognizes the influence of the father, and these boys are often the source of envy of those less favored. The rich boy finds plenty of "toadies" who bow down to his superiority, while he finds an inward pleasure in such sycophancy, even rewarding it, at times, by a division of his minor possessions. His sister, in the meantime, joins the "Colonial Dames," as it is not demanded that she establish the fact whether her ancestor was a private or a high officer—a farm hand or a cavalier—a carpenter or an aristocrat.

Though the boy's sister and his mother, cousins and aunts are traditionally supposed to monopolize all the gossip and scandal that is afloat, he comes in for his own share, though he has, with threats of terrible retribution, been warned against it. He calls one of his chums aside and, in most profound secrecy, imparts to him some dark deeds that are charged to some playmate's father, brother or uncle; he had married his governess, house-girl or cook; he had cheated a country parson in a horse swap, or appropriated the money belonging to a ward. The uncle was once crazy and had been confined in a lunatic asylum, while a cousin had once drawn a knife to kill a school teacher. These, with many other family skeletons, were confided, in deathless secrecy, and many an unfortunate boy has suffered terrible ostracism by these little whisperings of gossip among his schoolmates. It is simply a part of the warp and

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woof of human nature, which develops in early life, to sit in judgment upon the faults and foibles of fellow-creatures. It unfortunately expands and becomes more serious as we journey through life, until, as with the old Athenians, the love of it becomes almost a furor, which effervesces from the scandal-monger's tongue in the most sparkling details. Some people seem ever to be groping among the sewers of human nature and, with a muck-rake of vile imaginings, are ever searching for the evil there may be in their fellow-creatures. The good and beautiful interest them not, as they seem to live to denounce and pull down. Dr. Rainsford, of New York, spoke truly, when he recently said that our standard of social purity can never be any higher so long as we continue to feed prurient scandals, and that the blame for the shame of that city was not on the shoulders of its fallen women, but upon intelligent Christianity, which sits at home entrenched in selfishness. At the door of the scandal-monger rests the responsibility for nearly all social and domestic happiness.

Through the influence of the boy's love affairs, as well as his natural social inclinations, he soon forms a part of the circle devoted to dancing, candy-pullings and other amusements, where young people of both sexes are drawn together. Among his first accomplishments is that of dancing. At first, he only timidly ventures into the square dances, such as lancers, cotillions and reels, but finally he is not afraid of the schottische, polka, mazourka and waltz. At

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the ordinary "hops" of our boyhood, however, the square dances predominated, and there were usually two negro musicians, with a fiddle and a triangle, to which was occasionally added a tambourine and the invariable patting of the fiddler's foot, in unison with the music. On grand occasions, a base viol was also brought in, to spoil the other music with its deep, growling and discordant notes. But the music cut no figure in those days, as the inharmonies could have been thumped out of a superannuated piano and answered fully as well. It was the happiness of being with your best girl, but this was sometimes marred by your rival's superior terpsichorian accomplishments—a superior one in the eyes of the girl, at this time, and later in life. A good dancer, like a fine tenor voice, goes a long way toward winning a girl's heart. Such a rival must be met with a great number of counter-balancing qualities and you would never out-strip him, if he was allowed to dance and sing all the time.

With falling in love, other changes are observed in the boy. He is less taciturn and seems to find many new things in life. His personal apparel receives more attention, and he begins to beg for new suits, shoes, hats and cravats. His hair is combed with greater care, and if it did not lie down promptly, he could, when occasion presented, use oil and pomade. He would use up all of mother's and sister's cologne water, saturating his handkerchief and clothes, lest he might not have another chance at it. (I once

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poured a quantity of some sort of hair-renewer, belonging to an old maid aunt, over my handkerchief and head.) After much effort (possibly through some trade at school) he gets hold of an old watch, and when he secures a shining brass chain for the same and some jewelry gewgaw on his cravat, his happiness is very nearly complete. He surveys himself in the mirror, turns around in different positions, practicing bowing and smiling, walking and posing, displaying every inch as much vanity as could be charged against our young sisters.

When he goes forth, thus regaled to visit his sweetheart, he is in such a timorous and excited state of mind, that the chances are he will walk by her front gate in order to work up his courage, and take that tell-tale look out of his face. The boy is conscious of the eyes of the whole world being fixed upon him and intently watching the developments of his love affairs. He is sure that the servants know all about it, else they would not snicker and wear such significant looks when he calls. Of course the girl's brothers and sisters know all about it, and even the father and mother must have been apprised of such a momentous matter as his infatuation for Mary. But, as he ruminates over the affair and makes a thousand resolves, as to his methods of pursuing his courtship, the idea comes home to him that he has never told his girl anything about it. He has *looked* his love, and *acted* and *hinted* of his love, but has never actually declared it. He will de-

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lay it no longer, but **will** declare it that very evening. He even rehearses how he will lead up to the subject, and learns, by heart, a beautiful little love speech he will make.

All is now mentally adjusted, and he turns about and enters her yard. Her father meets him at the door, and there is something in his demeanor that is not reassuring. Possibly the "old man" is meditating on interposing. This is quite probable, as the course of true love is sometime followed by a course of lectures, and therefore can't run smooth. Fear and misgiving gradually take possession of the young lover, and he **wishes** he had not come.

But Mary appears and her gracious smile dissipates all doubt. She knows what he has come to say, at least he assumes that she does, and that, furthermore, she is ready to hear it and to say "yes." She even leads him into the parlor and suggests the sofa for their tête-à-tête. The moment had arrived. He would lead up to the subject, without loss of time. But alas! A loosely uttered word often changes destinies. Mary had slightly shuddered from the coolness of the room. "You shiver," he said, with some solicitude; "I trust you have not taken cold?"

"No," she replied, laughing. "It must have been a goose walking over my grave." Then he, with marked attention, said, "Happy goose." She smiled a second more, then looked serious, turned red in the face, grew angry, and with a contemptuous toss of

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the head, whisked out of the room. He heard her burst into tears, and, as her sobbing continued, the family rushed to her room. Our youth was non-plussed, but fearing her big brother would scowl in upon him, he sought his hat and took to his heels, with the speed of the wind. The romance was ended.

Nothing offers a greater stumbling block to the boy's social career than bashfulness. It requires long and trying experiences for him to feel natural and at ease in the presence of girls. He can't rid himself of the thought that everybody is watching him and noticing all that he does, or attempts to say. He is conscious of many of his imperfections—his dress, his awkwardness and his inability to find words for the conversation—in fact, his many shortcomings, which he confesses mentally to himself, but which he would resent if charged by others. Without realizing it, he is constantly making the matter worse, and as he wades deeper into the mire, he rebukes himself, grows irritable towards other boys who display an easy and natural manner and is in a frame to chastise anyone who dares "to poke fun at him."

Numerous difficulties have arisen among boys who have unconsciously given grievous offense to their bashful and blushing companions.

There is little doubt that more agonies are suffered than the world will ever know, by these timid and bashful youngsters. I have heard it asserted that a boy doesn't know how to blush, and the assertion is urged with such asperity that one is lead to

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believe that blushing is a virtue. But the boy does blush, and instead of a virtue, he regards it as one of the greatest afflictions of his Creator, since it is always the outward indication of the misery he is undergoing. It is true that some importance is attached to the matter, in the outside world, as to call a man an "unblushing scoundrel," is a most distinct slur on his character, and to tell another that you "blush for him," is a common form of insult. Mr. Darwin's observation determined the fact that blushing is confined to the human species, while the good old Burton prescribes, that to overcome it you should anoint the face at night with hare's blood, and, in the morning, wash it out with strawberry and cow-slip water.

The boy always manifests a keen interest in the mysterious and marvellous. Any and everything of this kind possesses for him a secret charm. This is displayed early in life, in the rapt attention he gives to nursery tales and to Black Mammy's recital of those occult things pertaining to voodooism. It is exhibited in their visits to the gypsies, and other fortune tellers, as well as exhibitions of mind-reading, hypnotism, mesmerism and phrenology. When he is old enough to become a "subject" for the phrenologist, he is one of the first to answer when the victims are called. He may not know what is *philoprogenitiveness* and *alimentiveness*, together with *citiveness* and *inhabitiveness*, but the worthy bump-ologist tells him that he has all of them in a most

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marked degree. Then he is shown to have a number of "alities," such as ideality, individuality, eventuality and casuality,—all of which is Greek to the boy, but he is furnished a chart, goes home and feels over his cranium and finds out all about it. There is a great deal of humbuggery in this phrenology business, though it is not without great possibilities. The student or physician who gives to his fellow man some comprehensive knowledge of the law which governs temperaments, and the bi-sexual relations, touches one of the foundation stones of nature, and he who teaches this lesson will be a noble savior of his race. This law of human temperaments, which teaches that certain dispositions are suited to each other, while certain others are totally unfitted to each other, is the pedestal of happiness or misery. There is a possibility that it might aid materially some unfortunate incubus of heredity and save many from premature graves.

As the boy approaches closely to manhood he is found possessed of a large amount of fetich superstition, which is nowadays called a fad. He has not yet overcome his aversion to graveyards at night, and what is more, he never will. He still has some queer ideas about Friday being an unlucky day, and this will most likely cling to him. He also entertains a vague respect for the horse shoe superstition, the notes of a screech-owl, and other things of evil omen. But his special predilection is for the rabbit-foot, which, if it has brought him one piece of good luck, is

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likely to hold his faith for the balance of his days. The same applies to the buck-eye, which is carried in the pocket continuously, as playing an important part in his destiny. This fetich worship, only slightly developed in boyhood, plays an important part among his elders in the outer world. It is recorded of Henry Irving, the noted actor, that he once changed the bill from "Hamlet," even after he had reached his dressing-room, because the rabbit-foot was missing, which he always used in making up for that character. He claimed that he felt a presentiment that something would go wrong, if he persisted in going on without his talisman. These incidents go to show that superstition is as strong among the educated as among the inexperienced and ignorant.

In another place in this volume we have enlarged upon the subject of the correction of boys, which we desire to be distinct from that period of boyhood now under consideration. As he draws near to the time when he is to lay aside his studies from the high school, either for a course in college, or to enter business life, he is subject only to correction through criticism. Whether this is administered in the school-room, at home, or by friends and relatives, it requires some tact and ingenuity to give such advice or criticism with the force intended. The boy grows very "techy," upon such matters as he enters this advanced state, and when there is a slight out-cropping upon his upper lip. No matter if rigid discipline demands, or the cloak of authority prompts a certain amount

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of criticism, the effect is unpleasant, unless given in a very quiet and gentle way, and outside the presence of any one else. He resents anything that is patronizing or that may have the appearance of an order from any one outside of his parents. It is a matter of general observation that any effort to direct the emotions has a tendency to produce the opposite effect; even to challenge a man to be brave is to make him nervous—to bid him admire a person, or a work of art is to suggest that he be critical; to command maid or lass to love their parents is to chill certain nascent inclinations in the desired direction. This is demonstrated throughout life—to make a duty for a Montague to hate a Capulet, is to start the loves of Romeo and Juliet. We may suggest the feeling, but cannot possibly impose it. It is easy to criticize the minister, the church, the school and the world in general, but these are often needlessly and harshly expressed. Most people can be led, few driven, even children, without spoiling them. Even servants are averse to unnecessary or harsh criticism, and it is bad policy to use it. It is so easy to complain when things do not please and quite as easy to forget, when they are well done. Many a boy has been hopelessly ruined in disposition and calloused in heart by being made a scape-goat for all the bad temper and fault-finding of the family. On the other hand, many noble deeds have been accomplished and many a man helped to greatness, because of proper words of encouragement. Numerous instances of this kind of

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fault-finding now illumine the pages of history. Outside of the incident of the Pharisee and the Publican, who went up in the temple to pray, there are the words of the old rabbi, who was awakened by one of his twelve sons, who said: "Behold my eleven brothers sleeping, and I am the only one who wakens to pray in the still watches of the night." "Son," said the wise old rabbi, "you had better sleep too, than wake to censure your brothers."

In concluding this division of our memoirs of boyhood, we are made to realize its many flagrant imperfections, its numerous omissions and our utter inability to compass all the varied features of that checkered epoch of life. In justification of such shortcomings, we might plead the lapse of memory, upon one hand, while on the other, it may be that the circumscribed limits of our early associations were not sufficiently comprehensive to give a general character to the work. We have purposely omitted the period of boy life after leaving the preparatory and high school to enter college, as it does not strictly fall within the limits of the purpose of this volume.

The college boy is a different individual altogether, as he has cast aside most of those arts and crafts which render him an interesting feature of boy life. In a measure, he is a premature man, who has discarded and repudiated all those foibles and idiosyncrasies, artless simplicities and wholesome oddities, which are essentially a part of the general life of boyhood. He may still retain many of the traits,

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qualities and ambitions which were planted in early youth, but they are now amalgamated with so much concealment, dissembling and duplicity that he is not the genuine boy of the "Old School Days."

We realize further, that much more could have been said concerning sports, pastimes and athletics, as being leading features of boy life. This is true, while at the same time it must be remembered that these same sports, etc., have a purely local character, and, as such, could not add much to the general interest of the work. However, in the closing chapter, or "Comprehensive Retrospection," we have added a great number of features—some of which were largely local—though nearly all peculiar to the extreme South.

The old school itself might have come in for a greater share of attention, but we have adhered to what was said in our preface, as to "telling tales out of school," and to shield much from the unsympathetic public, that might be told of the old academy and its multifold secrets. Furthermore, we think we have gone more or less extensively into this branch of the subject, and believe enough has been told for all the interest which such recitals may have given to the volume.

The subject of the wild and adventurous proclivities of boys, in running away from school and home, might have been properly and more extensively treated, but that is not a normal, or usual, trait of boyhood. The writer could give his own personal ex-

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perience in that line, which was fraught with many tribulations to himself, but it is one of those dark epochs of the long ago which we would prefer should sleep in oblivion.

Indeed, there may have been a great deal omitted that could have added more interest to the subject, but with all of its imperfections, we trust we have, with some degree of faithfulness, given a reasonably fair biography of boyhood.

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CHAPTER IX.

Literature of Boyhood.

A CHILD is, or can be, the most interesting of all creations, but human aid is required to invest it with the full interest it is capable of bearing, and its future depends on the manner in which this aid is given. Most children run on the lines their parents have laid down for them and glide into the fixed termini which these tutors have assured them are best and most convenient. The choice of the first books, to which the child becomes accustomed, rests with its parents, and the importance of this choice can hardly be exaggerated.

The books of our boyhood, for the special delight of children, were far more limited than nowadays, and as they cost possibly three or four times as much as they do at present, the circulation was circumscribed and their possession more keenly appreciated. After the boy has out-grown the nursery rhymes and fairy tales, and begun to appreciate more stirring reading, he generally becomes a sympathetic peruser, and an enthusiastic admirer of the old sea rovers.

There is something about a free life on the ocean wave which appeals strongly to the most cherished

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inclination of boyhood. The swish of the briny waves, the odor of the salt winds, the roll of shining waters, the scream of birds, the roar of breakers on the reef—all of these enraptured the imagination and stirred the depths of the youthful mind. Such was the impression made by the daring and recklessness of "Black Beard," "Red Ralph," and the many famous buccaneers of the past. The vision of a corsair barque, swift-winged as an eagle, speeding "o'er the glad waters of the dark, blue sea," and suddenly swooping down upon some rich argosy, or desperately attacking and sacking some town on the shores of El Dorado, possessed a thrilling interest which was never forgotten in after years. In those days of boyhood, the ethics of piracy of Olenois, Kidd, Drake and others did not trouble the youthful mind, but rather inflamed it with longing to engage in this questionable sea roving. The logic of youth justified the canons formulated by these terrible men—the maiming and slaying, robbing, kidnapping, "walking the plank," and other features of pirate life—were all the fortunes of war. If Spaniards were foolish enough to go down to the sea in ships, with the certainty of being overhauled by the Red Rover, they must put up with the dismal consequences. The impression thus created we carried to school, and would often cover our slates and exercise-books with crude outlines of piratical craft—all low in the water, with sharp prows, big sails and portentous flags, emblazoned with the skull and cross bones. The sailors

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were most formidable looking creatures and we invariably provided them with fierce moustaches of tremendous length. Happy were the boys in those days who lived near a pond or stream, on which they could launch their rudely constructed imitations of pirate ships, each mounted with tiny brass cannon and loaded to the mouth with slate pencil dust. To these piratical craft were given such names as "Water Witch," "Ocean Serpent," "Pirate King," or they were called after the names of the buccaneers themselves.

And what a world of thrilling interest there is for the youngster in Defoe's famous narrative of "Robinson Crusoe." The boy who has never read that book would be hard to locate, and, if found, could not legitimately lay claim to having experienced one of the chief glories of youth. It is conceived to be one of the chiefest works of all the vast literature of childhood. How vividly impressed upon the child mind is that quaint figure, standing upon its lonely isle, dressed in his goat skin cap and his goat skin garments, while he grasps his musket with one hand and shades his eyes with the other, as he looks out to sea to catch sight of some vagrant ship. Again, after long absence from everything human, we see him startled by the remarkable appearance of a footprint in the sand, and, as "the monarch of all he surveys," he starts forth to find that unexpected being in his faithful "Friday." The story, throughout, possesses that continuous charm which is all-absorbing

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to youth—adventure, alarm, subtle cunning, danger, and hair-breadth escapes. It matters not to the boy—a fact he seldom learns—that Crusoe (Selkirk) was himself a pirate. Indeed, the knowledge of this fact might have enveloped the hero with a more glorious crown of worship, if he had been known to belong to that charmed circle of corsairs.

Robinson Crusoe (who was Alexander Selkirk) was a real character from the kingdom of Fife, Scotland. For some indiscretion at home he ran away to sea, joining a pirate ship, which had been one of his early dreams. When they had reached the Southern Pacific he became involved in a difficulty with his chief over the division of booty, and he was marooned, being put off on the island of Juan Fernandez, about one hundred and fifty miles west of Chile. After twelve years of solitary life on this island he was picked up by a passing vessel and taken back to Scotland. In his native town of Lower Largo, in 1885, one of his wealthy lineal descendants erected a statue in his honor, in a niche in front of the house in which he was born in 1676. In this same house Defoe met his hero and obtained from him the story which has been immortalized.

There is an equal charm for the boy in the wonderful exploits of Don Quixote, and in our boyhood, when copies of this book were not so easily available, I can recall the old frayed and worn copy that had done service in many families. The daring of this valiant knight, coupled with the escapades of his

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faithful follower, Sancho Panza, set the youthful imagination astir with deeds of valor, love and adventure. Though much of the force of the work may have suffered from translation, it still remains one of the greatest books for the amusement and education of boyhood. It is a singular fact, in connection with this book, that it should have been written while Cervantes, its author, was in prison and suffering from physical infirmity and other unfavorable environments.

The same thing is true of the production of the "Pilgrim's Progress," another book which holds a warm place in the affections of youth. It is possible, however, that the peculiar situation, imprisonment and persecution of John Bunyan furnished the principal stimulant for this immortal dream, which might, under other circumstances, have been lost to the world.

"Valentine Vox" is another fiction of the long ago, which was wonderfully popular with the boys, as it was brimful of adventure. One does not soon forget a certain serio-comic scene in this book, where the soles of a gentleman's feet, confined in a private mad-house, are tickled to make him mad, ready for the government inspector, who is to pass upon his case. This novel appeared before the day of sensational stories, but it could certainly lay claim to that title. The book also had a good deal of low-class humor and described practical jokes, which always appeals to the boys.

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"The Vicar of Wakefield," is an immortal tale, which, in purity of plot and style, is not surpassed by any production of literature. It is especially adapted to the fancies of childhood and the world is always made healthier and brighter by such charming books. Strange to say, this book is said to have resulted from the author's disgust with his chosen profession, which was that of a physician. No matter what may have been the incentive, Dr. Goldsmith must have realized and felt, when it was completed, that he had won friends wherever English is spoken. There are books of the day which have a great attraction for the young while they are young, which for another generation of youthful readers will lose all their charm and meaning. But it can be said of "The Vicar of Wakefield," that it has lived through several generations and is just as interesting to-day as when it first came from the press.

The books to which we have referred are selected, more or less, at random, from a considerable number that were prominent thirty-five years ago, many of which are still much read, while others have passed into oblivion. Taste is an arbitrary power, compelling us to repudiate to-morrow what we glory in to-day. Numberless books are published annually, ostensibly as boy literature, but it is questionable if they perform that educational duty which, under the guise of pleasure, every child's book worthy of the name should perform.

In these days of theory and realism, it is some-

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times exceedingly difficult, in spite of the over-abundance of literature, to find stories that we are willing to give our boys and girls. Every genuine mother desires that her child shall have high ideals. It is natural for boys and girls to be hero-worshippers, and it is desirable for the formation of their own characters that these heroes shall be worthy of worship. The tendency of modern literature is to give photographic pictures of modern society, with its commonplace women and money-seeking men. It may be that the old age of romance and lofty ideals is a dead age, and that none of the knights of to-day are gallant enough to fight wind mills, like the noble Don Quixote de la Mancha, but every true mother desires that her boys shall be as chivalrous, and the girls as gentle and womanly, as the ladies of the by-gone age. Do the heroes of the modern novel stimulate the boy to noble endeavor? Youth is so imitative that there is great danger that the boy who reads the fiction of the hour, shall set up for his ideal the commonplace hero of the modern novel. This hero may be interesting to the student of human nature as a perfect diagram of anatomy may be interesting to the student of physiology, but if we wish to stimulate a child's love of beauty we would not be likely to give it a botanist's plate of dissected flowers, but as perfect a blossom as it were possible to get.

It is true that "grizzling hair the brain doth clear," and that "when we have come to forty year" we find many of our loftiest ideals filled with sawdust,

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yet there are few of us who will not say that we have been better men and women for the possession of those ideals. The youth who is fed on the romances of a generation ago, finds no lack of high ideas. The boy, whose hero is "Ivanhoe," or "Quentin Durward," receives a quickening impulse to his higher nature, which could never be gained by a perusal of the most polished rhetoric reciting the tale of a Wall street experience. It is a mistake to take the sentiment out of a boy's or girl's life. True sentiment is a part of every true woman, and the girl born to know too easily the realities and false pretense of the world around her, is sure, earlier or later, to become a coarse, worldly woman, whose Christian character is in danger of becoming absorbed in materialism. The girl who reads the story of the "Bride of Lammermoor," or the "Heart of Mid-Lothian," and does not find the impulses thrilled to the uttermost by these simple stories of Scottish life, written by the great master hand, must possess a coarse nature. The reading of these stories by growing schoolboys and girls should be encouraged. They supply just that romance and genuine sentiment which every young man and woman feels to be wanting in the modern novel. The present is also a golden age for one who wants to get information cheap. Easy roads to learning lie stretched before him in all directions. Not a science but has a primer, not a language but has its cheap dictionary, not a poet or a novel but can be secured for almost a song.

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It has been a subject of remark that the many tragic and heroic incidents of our war with Spain, had not furnished the proper inspiration and impetus to the minstrels of the hour. For some mysterious reason the tuneful lyre is silent, and not one has come forth to "smite the harp and sing in deathless strain."

It was not so during the memorable Civil war. It was then that the muse dipped her wings in lustral waters and flashed upon the world those specimens of deathless verse, which in grandeur of sentiment, eloquent symphonies and martial grandiloquence, must forever sparkle in the diadem of immortality.

The following, from a long list, will suffice to show the quantity of the great war lyrics:

"Voyage of the Good Ship Union," O. W. Holmes; "Clouds in the West," A. J. Requier; "The Stars and Bars," A. J. Requier; "Boy Brittan," Forceythe Wilson; "The Cumberland," Longfellow; "Little Giffin of Tennessee," F. O. Ticknor; "Stonewall Jackson's Way," J. W. Palmer; "Twilight on Sumpter," R. H. Stoddard; "Gettysburg," E. C. Stedman; "At Port Royal," J. G. Whittier; "Our Country's Call," Byrant; "Maryland, My Maryland," J. R. Randall; "A Cry to Arms," Henry Timrod; "Men of the North and West," Stoddard; "The Reveille," Bret Harte; "Carolina," Henry Timrod; "The Virginians of the Valley," F. O. Ticknor; "The Battle of Charleston Harbor," Paul H. Hayne; "Abraham Lincoln," R. H. Stoddard; "Commemoration Ode," J. R. Lowell; "Ashes of Glory," A. J. Requier; "The Conquered

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Banner," Father Ryan; "O Captain, My Captain," Walt Whitman; "The Blue and the Gray," F. M. Finch; "Ode in Honor of the Soldiers of the South," Paul H. Hayne; "Hymn for Decoration Day," Henry Timrod.

The list could be added to almost indefinitely. There is Mrs. Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic," Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie," Harte's "John Brown of Gettysburg," Read's "Sheridan's Ride," H. L. Flasher's "Zollicoffer" and "Death of Stonewall Jackson," Stedman's "How Old John Brown Took Harper's Ferry," and Ethel Lynn Beers' "All Quiet Along the Potomac To-night."

There are also those well-remembered songs: "Marching Through Georgia," "Tenting To-night," "Just Before the Battle, Mother," and others, which will live forever.

The Old Home and Its Memories.

CHAPTER X.

The Old Home and Its Memories.

IN revisiting the scenes of bygone days, the brooks, waysides, and hedgerows are perhaps the last to yield to the effacing finger of Time. They look much the same, in their annual habiliments, as they did in the long ago, before the vandal axe of the woodman had destroyed the growth of forests and groves, which were the landmarks of that period. It is a time, too, when one can find his affections going back strongly to the old days when the same elders and rushes dipped into the limpid brook, and when the old homestead was rich in blossoms, and the moonlight played, fairy-like, upon the ancestral lawn. The same brown thrush is clucking in the hedges, the catbird is alternately singing and fretting, while the identical leather-winged bat sallies forth at evening for his daily insect meal. There is the same timorous hare, venturing out at twilight, while the katydid and the cricket are singing the same old songs.

In the orchards the apple and peach trees have dropped their pink-tipped blossoms, and the tiny fruit gives promise of a luscious harvest by-and-by. The old rail fence (fast giving place to wire) is still in evi-

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dence, and is bedecked abundantly with wreaths of creeping dewberries and garlands of ground ivy. Tall brambles also rise in its corners and hang out their purple fruit in tempting clusters. Wild phlox here and there raise their solitary stalks and burst out in stately flowers.

You select one of these lanes, which are plentiful in the country, that winds among the woodlands and the fields and which has been forever free from the wheels of commerce. It is far away from the echoes of the world, and given over entirely to nature. A slumberous wood borders on one side, while on the other is a field, whose bloom and perfume mingle in unspeakable perfection. A bank runs under the edge of the lane and in the dark, perilous beauty of blossom you observe the deadly wild artichoke and night-shade growing side by side, with the homely, but healthy, wild thyme. Trailing from the high hedge top and wreathing downward to the bank, the honeysuckles dispute with the wild roses and muscadines. Out of the depths of the wood comes anon the drowsy cooing of a dove, or the quaint notes of the raincrow. A partridge, with her brood of tiny chicks, comes through a gap and runs across the lane, while ground squirrels, and their aristocratic brothers of the trees, scamper away at your approach.

Over there stands the old home, almost given over to decay, and in the hands of strangers, who seem to be waiting for it to tumble down and disappear. The empty windows look at us, as though in reproach,

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while the echoing walls seem to sigh as we pass, because they know its good old days can never come again. Yet, in that old house, there are long biographies—a family history of a generation. We close our eyes, for an instant, and it rises before the mental vision as boyhood's happy home. We climb the flight of steps, down which we trotted as children upon a thousand errands and missions. Here is the tiny room where our first lessons were learned; there stood the old cupboard from which we filched raisins and cake; in the corner of the next room stood the old family library, every volume from which we had read before we were sixteen; down those old stairs we had chased each other in a race to meet father coming home from town. Surely, the ghosts of all who once were here will resent the neglect into which the old home has fallen. The out-houses, servants' quarters, stable and carriage shed, as well as the dovecote, chicken house and dog kennels, have all disappeared and are numbered among the things that were. But all can be located in memory, while a few fragments, scattered here and there, tangibly attest their ancient existence. The walks of the lawn, not entirely eradicated, are still marked by straggling and distorted traces of the boxwood which formerly lined each walk. The old oaks are there, gnarled and frowning, as though they, too, were hoping for dissolution, since all else had departed. All the quondam vistas are changed, and, in the vandalism of progress, even the

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weeping willows on the roadside, leading to the village, have been cut down.

The village itself, now grown into a city, no longer bears any semblance to the town of boyhood. New and strange things have come into life and usurped the landmarks of youth. New faces and alien people now throng its streets, while the scream of whistles, hum of factories and noise of street cars, now take the place of the orderly silence that once reigned.

The mother of old school days was the bulwark of home and society. Her lines of life were cast in quiet places, and uninfluenced by the rapid march of the world, she found pleasure and happiness in the routine of domestic duties. One looks back to her with loving reverence, even to the "chastisings" with which she disciplined him for his own good. He regards with awesome delight her self-sacrifices, which, on his part were undeserved, yet she has ministered to him and stimulated in him a desire to be clean enough and upright enough to deserve her companionship. She had but few theories and looked at life with open, honest eyes. She knew herself to be a woman and was content, though in the distance she may have heard the voices of some of her masculine sisters clamoring for more of woman's rights. The great trouble with that class of reformers, in those times, as well as the present, was an inability to form an alliance with their own sex, either offensive or defensive. The mother of long ago had views of her own, but outside of the home circle, or in church matters, she

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never sought any expression of them. Her duty, first and all the time, was to her home, which was embellished by her economies and made radiant by her virtues and unalloyed spirituality.

One of the leading epochs of these old days was the annual house cleaning. Our father used to call it the "annual malady," as he was turned out of doors immediately after breakfast, and informed that the mid-day meal would be very limited that day. This household cataclysm, or mania, breaks out in the spring, soon after the bluebird has returned and begins to warble his dulcet notes. It is like the measles—when it breaks out in a family it has to run its course. Some experts have been so harsh as to call it a species of emotional insanity, absolutely incurable. **I**t has well defined and well understood symptoms, which are manifested by a bewildering appearance of scrubbing brushes, mops, soap and tubs, which are menacingly arranged along the back porch the evening before the assault begins. When the latter is over, and everything has found its way back to its accustomed place, the exiled and straggling remnants of the family are once more called in from their sundry hiding places and domestic life assumes the "eventenor of its way." This malady is one which has afflicted womankind from the earliest ages. Pliny mentions the fact that, in his day, the Roman wives turned their households upside down for a week under the pretense of getting things clean, and possibly the expurgation of that insect which "has no wings at all, but

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gets there all the same." It is quite probable that the famous pictures of the catacombs of Egypt, representing a lot of household furniture in front of an Egyptian residence, is a record of the same effect.

The servant girl problem was never so serious in the old days as it is to-day, but there were trials innumerable experienced with this queen of the back yard. In the South, in those days, such help was usually negro girls, and while they were in subjection they were often possessed of unruly traits which would sometimes lead to evil consequences. If angered by the mistress, through the effect of some scold or reprimand, it was not improbable that the hired girl would revenge herself in some way upon the children, or secretly break some valuable piece of bric-a-brac. Many were her methods of cunning, if she were evilly disposed. She was sometimes called into the kitchen to assume temporary charge, and this would usually raise her dander to a high pitch, as she hated such work. To cause her recall, she would adopt some ingenious method, usually an assumption of cheerfulness, and with a predilection for singing, her spirits would exult in noisy sounds; if not singing a solo, she would be banging the andirons, shaking the tables and coal scuttles, poking the fire, rattling the stove lids, turning over chairs, dropping the crockery and giving other evidence of her "joyousness." Such sounds are not music to the ear of the good housewife, and it would not usually take long

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for the servant girl to carry her point and secure her extirpation from the kitchen.

But the true empress of the old-time kitchen, as well as the most important and consequential person on the premises, was "Black Mammy." Many have sung her praises, and, from the standpoint of our northern friends, she must have become one of the oldest targets of southern humor and affection. Yet, her memory is dear to the heart of every southern boy, and as human nature has deeper roots than any dictates of literary pleasure, we will go on singing the praises of this blessed old soul until time shall be no more. What could appeal more strongly to the boyish heart than some one who was ever ready to gratify his perennial state of hunger? She would save him the chicken livers and gizzards, or would steal him a luscious tea cake while it was hot from the oven, and would even anticipate his desires in everything that appealed to the stomach. Can a boy ever forget such a friend? It was Black Mammy who came to our relief when a basket of cooked dainties was all that stood in the way of a glorious picnic. She was our champion when tattlers brought us in close proximity to a switching. It is true that she sometimes switched us herself, but only when we knew that it was richly deserved, and we even welcomed it from her, as we full well knew if the matter were adjudicated by the supreme heads of the family, our punishment would have been more severe. Through all the wretchedness, which was sometimes the lot of childhood, but

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was evanescent—usually mere pin scratches—(and were not seriously considered by our elders) it was Black Mammy who came with soothing words and dried up our tears, assuaging our grief by giving us some little dainty. She told us thrilling stories—legends and traditions of her people—all about hobgoblins and haunts, and always with a moral of how the good little boy escaped all harm. In fact, she was the blessed patron of youth—its friend and defender—the guardian angel of boyhood.

As to her cooking, and especially those substantial foods which graced the family board, she was unexcelled. Nobody could make such delicious rolls and light bread, otherwise known as baker's bread. This was none of your modern bread, kneaded and cooked by half-naked men, in steaming underground kitchens, and among the cockroaches, spiders and vermin. How much better to contemplate it, as made by Phyllis, with her round plump arms, bared to the elbow, and well washed hands, coated with paste and flour. This bread of the home-made is also more wholesome, because it is genuine, being innocent of those tricks by which some bakers are indemnified for loss in unsold goods and non-paying customers. And those delicious jams, marmalades and preserves she used to make are now only seen and tasted in memory. We buy them, but they are often an abomination, and, though the mixing may have been done with the skill of practice, the result is not satisfactory, as the ingredients are not properly selected, and too

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much economy practised in order to make something cheap. This is illustrated by the fact that nearly all of the home-made preparations command a much higher price in the market. It is a grievous pity that this class of home industries is so rapidly passing into a lost art.

There is also the old vegetable garden, with its walks bordered by sage and spinach, thyme and dwarf apples, and the whole enclosed by hedges of fig, quince, plum and pomegranate. In the clean swept walks we have spent hours catching the tiny little worms, called "jacks," which had burrowed in the path, using a sprig of escalote to tempt him to bite and to draw him from his retreat. One of the prides of childhood was to be allowed to dig up things grown in the garden, such as grass-nuts, artichokes, tubers and ground peas. It was a practical use of the boy's propensity for destruction, while it furnished an opportunity for him to gratify his everlasting appetite. The "goober" was the boy's especial delight, and, since those old days, has been recognized commercially as possessing many virtues, not only as an excellent cattle food, but its oil, as a lighting fluid and lubricant. From all of which it appears that this little plebeian peanut, which hitherto has been looked down upon as the stock-in-trade of the street corner vender, the food of the gallery god, and the luxury of the circus, has other and higher uses, and is playing a useful part in the economy of man and beast.

Just outside of the garden is the apple and peach

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orchard, which has furnished its quota to the pleasures and sorrows of boyhood. We could not wait for the tempting fruit to ripen, and in defiance of mother's injunction, plucked and ate the forbidden. In due time the natural result followed—the penalty of disobedience and the violation of natural law—when spasms of pain, frightened parents and a scurrying for the doctor, were in order. "Doctor!" What child can utter that name without bitter memories? While to say "medicine" is like talking of gravy to a person in the agonies of sea sickness. Mr. Spencer states that the notion of the efficacy of medicine being proportioned to its nastiness, is a survival from the old belief that disease was caused from an indwelling demon, who must be driven out by administering something to the patient as disagreeable as possible. In our boyhood we would readily have adopted this view, for if any demon could stand quinine, rhubarb and castor oil, he must indeed be a most determined devil. The doctor has been styled the "Good Samaritan," and generally stands high in the affections of his rural patrons. In fact, he was a sort of rural oracle, in the old days, in everything except politics and religion, between which he had to steer with caution. It was just as prudent, in the long ago, that the old doctor should shy away also from any criticism of those customs, hallowed by age, such as tobacco chewing and smoking, as well as when pulverized into snuff.

The oracle of fashion was generally some gracious,

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tactful spinster, and, in those days of the crinoline, chignon, waterfall and "Queen Emma" hats, she filled an important place. She smoothed away many embarrassments for her younger and more sentimental sisters, and was ever a winsome figure in the moving panorama of social life. Our spinster was also an adept in needlework, stitching, smocking, knitting and embroidering with the utmost ease, and gladly imparting such information to the young girls. She also taught them how to make up presents for their sweethearts, in embroidered slippers, hemstitched handkerchiefs, fancy pincushions, sachet and tobacco pouches. Such an oracle is truly worthy of the title. And she was a great stickler for female modesty and for chivalry among their admirers, inculcating many ideas among the sexes, which are run down and trampled upon in the swift pace of modern social life.

In the long ago, Saturday was the prominent day of the week, as the village was, at that time, thronged with people from the country districts. Along the outer edge of the sidewalk, in town, runs an almost continuous row of hitching posts, to which the ruralists attached their horses and mules, while those who had come in with ox teams generally secured them to their wagons and loosed the yoke that they might freely eat the timothy that had been brought for them. This Saturday-coming to town was continuous throughout the year, whether the winters were severe and the ground covered with snow, the roads in bad condition, or the summer heat was at its maxi-

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mum, and from the highways dust would be rising in blinding clouds. The countryman was undeterred from carrying out his time-honored custom, of visiting town on Saturday. Often he would have no particular business, beyond visiting the postoffice, but come he must, if he had to stop a plow to do so. Among other reasons, the farmer comes in for his millet seed, to see the "Squire," to quarrel over taxes, to renew his gin saws, or to buy a few luxuries in the way of sugar, coffee, tobacco and corn whiskey. This custom is still continued down to the present day, with some variations in conditions. The roads are now better, vehicles are lighter and nearly every farmer has an extra team of horses and a good buggy, and can cover the distance in a brief space of time.

Saturday was also the boy's holiday from school, and he generally improved it in his own peculiar way, either hunting or fishing, gathering angelica, chestnuts and sweetgum, damming up brooks for swimming pools, and, in a hundred other ways he found the day too short to do all he had to do. Sometimes the holiday was utilized in a visit to the country, making an early start, at sunrise, in order to have the full benefit of the day. Such a journey would lead us through long stretches of rich pasture, watered by a slow moving stream; groups of cattle cropping the bermuda of the meadows and on, through long vistas of shaggy woodland, in whose deep bowery recesses might be the haunts of Pan and his satyrs. There would be long ranges of corn and cotton fields, as well

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as undulating slopes and hillsides, covered by green and gold effects of wheat and oats. These sights, with the shady lanes, birds, insects and flowers, as well as some fishing, and then repose under a grove of oaks, where lunch was enjoyed, would constitute the visit to the country. The return home would generally develop some of the inevitable consequences of a sojourn in the summer woods—a liberal collection of chigoes and wood-ticks—which generally amused us for the following two or three days. But these are minor troubles, compared to the eternal torments of another summer visitor—the house-fly. A retrospection of this little creature, leads us to think that he has largely contributed to lessening Christianity in the world, although they might have been employed to soften the heart of Pharaoh, and also to test the patience of Job.

Few of us have the consideration and forbearance of Uncle Toby, in turning a captured fly loose, with the amiable and philosophic address to that insect touching the amplitude of the universe. A man may be a Cato in his conceits, but a Catullus in his conduct. Our chief remembrance of the house-fly was wielding an immense peacock featherbrush, in fanning them from the paternal brow, during his post-prandial siesta, after we had taken turn-about in doing the same office at the table. These tasks were cheerless and tiresome, while they embittered us against the fly, and we sought revenge by catching and imprisoning him in bottles, or depriving him of his

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wings or legs and turning him loose. In after years I read of the adventures of the bald-headed man and the fly, which vividly brought back my early occupation. The bald-headed man lay asleep—this was the prologue to the drama. Act first was the descent of the fly on his head and his awakening from slumber by the energetic slap he gave his cranium in the hope of killing the intruder. But the fly deftly slipped away, alighted on the chandelier, laughed, as he spat on his hands and rubbed his wings for the next round. Then began act second. This was the arousing of vengeance. The bald-headed man secures a towel and lies in wait for the enemy. Effort after effort to secure his prey is made and he then again sinks to rest. The finale of the drama witnesses his waking up, on the fly's invitation to combat, conveyed this time by tickling the hairless man's nose. He seizes his towel once again and pursues the frisky and dastardly insect. His towel, in its wild swing, knocks over a pair of vases—then follows the ink stand, and he stops to mop up the ink from his carpet with the towel. Off he goes again in hot pursuit, now desperately mad. He sends the end of his stick, to which he has secured the towel, through a pane of glass. Finally he brings down the chandelier just as the fly sweeps victoriously out of the window, and the bald-headed man is left wiping and painting his face with the inky towel. Can any one wonder, after such an experience, at the propriety of the devil's name of Beelzebub, which, being interpreted, is "The Lord of Flies."

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In concluding this feature of the memoirs of the old home, and old school days, it might be appropriate to dwell upon the facts of being put to trade, or choosing a profession, but this has so little of the flavor of light-hearted boyhood that it has been omitted. It was also our original intention to make a special feature of a comprehensive comparison of city and country life, in the old times here recorded. This, too, has been abandoned, as the facts incorporated, at random, in this volume, will sufficiently cover that subject.

There was also an inclination to enlarge upon the subject of social life, and the chivalry of the old days, as compared with the present. But there has been so much contributed to this question and there exists such a wide divergence of opinion concerning it—the decline of chivalry—that the author would prefer to avoid entering the controversy.

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CHAPTER XI.

A General Retrospection.

WHEN the man of mature age looks back, through the long vista of the past, and in silent retrospection, lives over again those by-gone days of childhood, he is pretty sure to fall into an abstruse channel of speculation and comparison of the outcome—the successes and failures of those among whom he grew up to the estate of manhood. He goes back into this remote region, mental and material, that is entirely out of the track of worldly ambition, and looks upon the expanse of years spread out in one vast panorama before him. He sees this, that and the other schoolmate ripening in wisdom, and becoming great men. One achieves distinction in the pulpit, another is a famous lawyer, another wears the chaplet of a military chieftain, another is a distinguished physician, and still another is a governor or a cabinet minister. He likes to see them rise and gazes with admiration upon every herald of their exploits and genius in the newspapers. In a measure, he feels that he was, in some vague way, an assistant to the architecture of their good fortunes, because his life was so intimately blended with theirs in those far-away days of boy life. He remembers, and now

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feels an inward pride in the fact, that in school and college competitions with them, he did not come off second best. He is much struck and impressed at finding this one, whom he remembers as an unmitigated dunce, getting on very respectably in life; he recalls how, at school, he used to wonder whether the difference between the clever boys and the "boobies," would show, later on, the same gulf as was then manifest in their relative positions. But all these doubts and speculations are largely solved now, as he looks out over the world and its activities. In some instances, strange as it may seem, the "booby" has far outstripped his more clever companions of school days, in the battle they have mutually entered; the shy and reserved boy, upon whom his bolder playmates imposed, has forged ahead to fame and fortune; the blubbing "Cissy-boy" and even the poor ostracized "greeny," have long since emerged from the commonplace and become successes as merchants and professional men. All along the line are surprises of which there was not even the remotest hint in the early days of boyhood.

To the student of human life, as well as all others, this is a sort of unsolved riddle, which displays such contradictions as to be subject to no ordinary methods of analysis. Still, it is possible to find at least a partial explanation in the dormant qualities and latent energies of every human life. It is what might be properly styled the "undiscovered countries" in ourselves. And this view of the subject suggests some interest-

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ing analogies, which would not be out of place in this retrospective review.

There are no midsummer dreams more pleasurable than those which thickly throng upon the fancy, when, in the quiet of one's library, he turns over the leaves of those ancient historians, philosophers and geographers who had pushed their theories to the utmost verge to which inquiry had dared to extend her power. There could be observed, in tracing the bounds of the then known world, significant blank spaces lettered "terra incognita." How full of suggestion, to the fertile imagination, must they have been in those far-off days when human enterprise had still before it such wide fields of labor. In this spot, More could plant "Utopia"; over there, in that blank was room and to spare for Prospero's enchanted region; here, in this one was space for Bacon's "New Atalantis"; while all about was an amplitude of undiscovered country for Cathays innumerable, as well as for El Doradoes and Hesperides unbounded. But it so happens that the world is now parcelled out, with a topographer's particularity and our maps have long since ceased to gape with those delicious voids which the mind seized upon so readily and made its own. Yet, there are other "undiscovered countries," which will exist for human speculation and perplexity as long as the world endures. One may not believe with the cynic that in every man lurks some thing or thought of evil; some wickedness so monstrous that if it were revealed, even his nearest and dearest

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friends would learn to hate him. Rather let us contemplate the contrary—that an illimitable fund of dormant good is hidden away in this secret storehouse—qualities and abilities undreamed of—which are in reserve for the surprise and applause of his friends. In every county there may be a “village Hampden”—in every state a Hobson. As George Eliot says: “There is a great deal of unmapped country within us.” Let us hope that the worst part of what is hidden will be dormant forever. We know for a certainty in glancing at history, that there was much in the glorious Shakespeare which even his most intimate associates never knew. It is equally so with great scientists, inventors and philanthropists, as well as with great naval and military captains. It is prominent in all the professional and business world and reaches down to its most commonplace ranks.

Then again, there are the “undiscovered countries,” toward which each of us reaches his unavailing hands—the dreams we have never realized, the hopes we have never fulfilled, the ambitions we have never satisfied. We grope about blindly, conscious that we have not found the key which would open the golden gates; the clue that would lead us to the goal for which we are in search. We find ourselves so fettered by circumstances that we cannot plunge blithely into the freedom of our will and wishes. We have a sense of some capacities in us that have never been developed; and hence it happens that in the map of our lives yawns a dreary gap—a *terra incognita*—which

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we have neither the time nor opportunity to fill up. I once knew a man with a strong taste and talent for chemical science; but his duties as a bread-winner so hampered him that he never found the means of cultivating his life's ideal. It was almost pitiful to hear him promising that, by and by, he would give up the work he disliked (but to which he was bound by the iron cord of circumstances) and employ his happy leisure in the pursuits of the laboratory. It was not to be, for he died without setting his foot within the "undiscovered country" to which his aspirations had ever pointed. I know another man, now hedged about by unfortunate circumstances, who has a wonderful predilection for experimental science, and who would undoubtedly accomplish much in that field if his environments were different. Timid, retiring and reserved by nature—a simple breath of ridicule was enough, at one time, to cast a shadow upon his life—while the careless world only gives him the passing thought of a "crank." Thus the loftier and purer side of his intellect and character remains for us always a *terra incognita*. It was this same environment of genius which Dante called "a voiceless thought, sheathed like a sword," and as Archbishop Trench puts it:

*"When thou art fain to trace a map of thine own heart,
As undiscovered land, set down the largest part."*

But, fortunately for the world and many of its

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modest children, there are some to whom fortuitous circumstance has granted a deep knowledge of self, and has allowed them to tear away the veil of Isis, and bring forth the hidden talents—the dormant qualities and energies to which we have referred.

In looking back over the career of that other division of our boyhood friends, who have not been successful, and who are probably struggling manfully to “keep the wolf from the door,” we are furnished with one of the most pathetic phases of life. We omit those whose evil ways, profligate habits, intemperate appetites, shiftless proclivities and general indolence, have brought the legitimate consequences of their folly. They have been their own enemies, and the architects of their own downfall. But we refer to that class, who, for the certain amount of health or disease they enjoy or suffer, are not responsible. From the cradle they have been hampered in the struggle of existence with that significant calamity which we phrase “bad constitution,” graven deeply in their frames and written on the muscles, nerves and brain. They have not started life with a clean bill of health and are consequently sorely handicapped in the battle, and through no fault of their own. While it is true that environment can partially atone for this disparity, that consolation is uncertain and only comes through the fickleness of blind chance and impious fate. Therefore, we say there is a pathos in such a case, which arouses every emotion of pity in our nature, because, to him only can come, with prac-

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tical force, the problem, Is life worth living? A man bravely silent, under such a sorrow, and manfully facing the inevitable, is a sight to command admiration. Such, however, has been our happy privilege, in one or two instances of these old schoolmates, who were so afflicted, that they might, like Cowper, have exclaimed: "I am like the infernal frog out of Acheron, covered with the ooze and mud of melancholy." Yet, it was not so with our afflicted friends, for their heroic struggles against adversity demonstrated that they acted upon the quaint advice of Rufus Choate: "When my constitution is gone, I live on the by-laws."

But we can recall many other instances where the lot of our boyhood friends has been strikingly unequal, and which demonstrated that there was not even such a thing as equality in the family. Of two brothers I knew, for example, one was endowed with a splendid physique, with large powers of acquisition and executive capacity, which fitted him for high position; while the other brother was burdened with a feeble body, subject to pain, and a spirit nervous and retiring, that shut him in like a snail in its shell. Necessarily, it was impossible for these two brothers to enjoy an equal amount of happiness, or that their relative capacities should bring an equal amount of success.

Still, life has many compensations, while physical infirmities and unfortunate circumstances have served in many cases to brace a man's courage for some signal enterprise. It was in blindness and solitude that Milton sought for the light that "shines inward,"

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so that he might see and tell things invisible to mortal sight; it was in prison that Cervantes and Bunyan wrote their immortal books; in gloom and obscurity, Cowper wrote his famous verse; neither wounds nor bodily weakness lessened the courage of Nelson, and, while weighted terribly in the race, Dr. Johnson reached the goal in life. Probably the men who have taught the world most, are those who have suffered the most severely. And this same compensation seems to be a law of nature. Nobody wishes to be poor, and yet the poor man escapes a thousand worries and obligations that the claims of society exact from his richer neighbor. He does not have to go to dinner parties, or to give them; he is not pestered with unreasonable demands upon his purse, while the tax gatherer passes him by; he does not suffer from the plague of servants, and is in no danger of lending money on bad securities.

The part which woman has played in our lives, from boyhood to middle age, enriches retrospection with its most significant and charming pictures. Certainly no one in this hard and gritty age can wish to pose as a "man of sentiment," for what brought tears to the eyes of our grandparents, only makes us laugh. We prefer burlesque to tragedy. Still, there are times when the memory of the days between youth and middle age will raise ghosts that cannot be readily laid. It is strange to note how difficult a man finds it to realize the advance of age. It flashes upon him, however, sometimes with a vividness that is startling.

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We may have had a passionate attachment in youth, which ended as so many early fancies do. For a time it seemed as though no earthly power could sever the attachment between lad and lass. Had they not made vows of eternal fidelity—defying fate, guardians and poverty—and how could love such as theirs ever fade? But it did fade after a few weeks or months of bliss, and twenty years—shall we say?—have passed since the two parted. Then a chance meeting suddenly brings the quondam lovers face to face—what a change the years have made! Is that stout looking matron the same being as the fair, slim and graceful girl, whose soft eyes and winning smile once sufficed to vanquish a lover? That once immaculate brow, though still fair and open, is impressed with the mark of time's passing feet. The cheeks have lost their delicate curves, while she is rubicund, pendulous and many-fleshed.

At the same time she gazes upon her old lover with something of the same sensation. Can that corpulent—almost flabby—man, now “bearded like a pard,” and the lineaments of whose face show that all his soul is wrapt in the cares of money-getting—be the handsome and enthusiastic youth who had once filled her young girl's heart with dreams of unalloyed happiness?

But while the old Queen of Hearts may have dropped out of our lives, another empress, more glorious and lasting, has entered and possessed the heart. The new queen is not a fleeting fancy, like the old

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one, which had, meteor-like, flashed across us, and then quickly disappeared in boundless space. She has come into our lives as a permanency—a helpmeet—to share all of its lights and shadows, and to invest it with a peculiar grace and tenderness it never knew before. She has created home, consecrated it with genuine happiness, and thrown over it an atmosphere of quiet and contentment that is everywhere an inexhaustible benediction. She is no extraordinary woman, and lays no claim to the power and force of genius. All of her intellectual vigor, culture, imagination and passion are concentrated in aiding her husband in achieving whatever has been undertaken. And who can fully appreciate such immeasurable aid, which is daily giving forth such tangible results in the business and professional world? There is scarcely a department of human activity in which she is not the “power behind the throne.” It is not intended by this assertion to enter into a discussion of that scholastic question as to the relative or comparative mental power of men and women. We suppose it will be accepted, that women are not equal to men in many things; and it is equally true of the converse. But experience shows that women are gifted with a quickness of analysis, a clearness of perception, unfailing good sense and a faculty of prompt decision, which make them invaluable as advisers. On the other hand, the cynic will smilingly protest that this is idealism, and that unhappy and disappointing alliances predominate. He will point out the social

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unrest, the scandals and divorces which daily fill the public prints. Affliction, adversity, incompatibility, and many other things, have been the fruitful cause of these mesalliances, but, on the whole, happy marriages have certainly been the rule. I am, however, sadly reminded of the cynic's charge, when I recall a most unfortunate case, which I will here relate, substituting fictitious names.

Among my most intimate associates no one stood higher in my esteem than George Hartley. He was both my schoolmate and college chum, and the strong friendship which had bound us together in school days was continued and strengthened when we had left our *alma mater* and entered upon the sterner struggle of the battle of life. His inclinations early tended toward the legal profession, and being finely equipped with superior talent, commanding address, and rare gifts of oratory, he soon made his way into the front rank, and his advice and counsel were always in demand in important cases.

It was when he had reached this state of a certain and a liberal income, and was upon the high road to fame and fortune, that the oft-deferred subject of matrimony came into his mind, and took sudden possession of his whole being. Despite his erudite powers in matters of law, he was more or less simple in affairs of sentiment, and was easily fascinated by outward charms, coupled with wit, vivacity and brilliancy. In this delusion, however, he was by no means alone, as the majority of men display very

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little practical sense in the all-important selection of a helpmeet, which is equally true of the opposite sex. Even the most sensible of men are swayed easily by the charms of a pretty face, and a woman of tact and discretion could capture, at will, the most difficult of them, if she really appreciated her powers. This fact is just as true now as it was in the early days of the world, and will so continue to the end of time.

But George did the most natural thing in the world when he selected, from the large coterie of his acquaintances, one of the sweetest, prettiest and most accomplished young ladies of the smart set in which he moved. Lillian was the most popular beauty of a large and brilliant bevy of charming girls, and her train of admirers could be counted by the score, to the envy of her less fortunate sisters. In fact, her universal popularity was one stimulus to the pressing suit of George, and when it became known that he had secured such a prize he was the subject of general congratulation.

Yet the average judgment of the world, in affairs of this kind, is very unreliable, because it is superficial and thoughtless. It disregards all questions of the law of affinities and has no concern for the philosophy of fitness and compatibility. The same is true of one's friends, who are often the innocent cause of much of the marital unhappiness of those nearest and dearest to them, by stimulating and encouraging unfortunate alliances, without considering the

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deeper conditions which go towards making ideal unions.

But George and Lillian were married and made an extended European tour, returning after several months, with every outward appearance of the most supreme contentment and happiness. In the meantime, I had left that locality and located in business in a distant state. I received occasional letters from my old-time friend, which were not such epistles as one would expect from a happy bridegroom. Finally, after a somewhat longer delay than usual, I was made very apprehensive for his state of mind and happiness by the reception of the following letter:

“DEAR OLD CHUM: I am married now, for some considerable time, and, for the life of me I don't know that I gladden or sorrow at the bargain. Nor is this quandary produced by any loss of those charms and graces which first attracted me to Lillian. On the contrary, they are measurably increased, and I suppose I should be the prouder of them. But the deuce of the business is, she is surrounded by a galaxy of beaux, whose attentions she, by no means, discourages, but to whom she is more complacent than to myself. In fact, I can scarcely return home from the office that I don't meet her with some spruce fellow acquaintance, with whom she appears to be enjoying herself as well as she ever did in my own company. Indeed, she seems to be greatly flattered by these gallantries and attentions of other men—

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decidedly more than I do. Furthermore, there is not an entertainment, a hop, a german, or a cotillion, not a single one, that I am not compelled to attend with her, no matter how I may feel about it, and you know my prejudices against too much of this form of diversion for married people. Once there, I am left completely to shift for myself, and get only an occasional glimpse of my wife, as she is whirled around, in the embrace of different fellows, until sheer exhaustion demands a rest.

"Old chum, I may be jealous or I may be a 'durned' fool, to allow such matters to have such a powerful influence with me, but these things are, nevertheless, robbing me of all peace of mind, and I am just as miserable and unhappy as one well can be. If I gently chide her, or attempt to forbid her humors about young men, she becomes angry and hysterical, says I am a jealous brute, talks of her virtue and all that sort of thing. And, indeed, I feel like a wretched brute, after she has delivered herself of one of these spasms of indignation and winds up in a paroxysm of sobs. Of course, I abandon all further rebuke, kick myself for having started it, and wind up with the most abject apologies for my misconduct and 'brutality'—but what am I to do? If I calmly permit the matter to rest, without protest, the license will bring more discomfort and trouble, while I will continue to be as uneasy and miserable as a man of honor can well afford to be.

"Yours, etc.,

GEORGE."

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I read and re-read this letter carefully, and after long pondering over its contents, I laid it aside and fell into something of a philosophic mood. It was the reflex of so many similar cases that rapidly trooped into memory, and all were generally outside the pale of friendly interference. Man, in his very essence, is selfish, even about his griefs and disappointments. He will often court your opinion and advice, but, down deep in his heart he has formulated the answer he would have you make, and no other will suit him. He will severely criticize those near and dear to him, ostensibly reaching out for your approval, but, if you are wise, you will evade such approbations and keep your opinion to yourself. All of these things I fully weighed before venturing a reply upon the delicate questions and troubles enumerated in my friend's letter. But the possession of his entire confidence was one of the cherished things of our long friendship, and I mentally ruled it cowardice for me to hesitate longer to speak out plainly and to give the subject all the philosophy I could bring to bear upon it. My reply was thoughtful, earnest and serious, because I was thoroughly familiar with the depths of his nature and fully realized that he was approaching a crisis in his married life that was likely to precipitate life-long unhappiness, unless something was done to stem it.

In due course my letter reached him, and it was several weeks before I received a reply, briefly thanking me for my friendly interest, while, at the same

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time, suggesting that the affair was now beyond control, and that heaven only knew what would be the outcome. That some grievous circumstance had intervened I was quite sure, though I have never been able to determine what it was. My knowledge of his intense pride and high sense of honor, coupled with the ordeal through which I knew he was passing, suggested, as if by inspiration, that he was meditating some desperate alternative. Believing that I had great influence with him, I resolved to take the first train south, to have a personal conference, and to that end made every preparation to leave the following morning.

That night a telegram reached me bearing briefly the fatal tidings that George had committed suicide.

In the course of these memoirs I have had much to say concerning the terrors and superstitions of boyhood, as such things are deeply interwoven in the career of youth. Of course, all sensible people have set down as vagaries and hallucinations everything connected with haunts and ghosts, while at the same time something will now and then occur which will leave us in a very puzzled frame of mind. While science can generally explain everything that may appear unusual or occult, I will here relate an experience, certainly extraordinary, which, to this day, fails of any clear explanation. That it can and will be explained, in some natural way, I have no doubt, but I give the facts just as they occurred.

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Several years ago, after many previous postponements, I made a visit to an old college chum in a distant state. Though formerly one of the most jovial and companionable fellows, he had degenerated into a recluse, with just a slight taint of the misanthrope. This was evidenced by the selection and surroundings of his home, its weird furnishings and the general solitariness of everything pertaining to it. His house was located in a more or less sombre stretch of country, about three miles from the railroad station, and approached from the highway through a long avenue of gloomy, sentinel pines. Here, with no other companions than two old family servants, he had passed eight or ten years of voluntary exile, as the indulgent lord and master of an immense landed estate. He greeted me with some of the old-time affability and geniality, but I could see, at a glance, that great changes had been wrought in his personal appearance, while his strained effort to keep up a flow of spirits indicated that something out of the ordinary was haunting the mind and refusing submission to the will.

My first impression was that his secluded, hermit life had gradually sapped his flow of good humor and left him a prey to the morbid melancholy thoughts which occasionally seized him in the old college days.

But, as we talked over those quondam times and recounted our numerous escapades together, he seemed to gradually and imperceptibly fall back into his old self, utterly oblivious of the present. It was near midnight when we bade each other good-night, and I

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was conducted to my room on an upper floor. The weariness of a long journey had not been realized until now, when the sight of a large and inviting bed suggested glorious visions of a long, sweet rest, which was never to be mine for that night. I had partly disrobed and my mind continued much absorbed and perturbed by the strange changes that I had observed in my friend, when I was almost startled by his noiselessly opening the door of my chamber and entering. With apologies for the seeming disturbance, he said that he had neglected to tell me that I should disregard any noises that might be created below, during the night, as one of the servants was unfortunately addicted to somnambulism. With this brief speech and injunction he seemed to hurriedly leave the room, as I laughingly told him it would require a cannon to wake me after I was once in the arms of Morpheus. On further reflection, however, I recalled how he had so quickly left the room, evidently desirous that I should make no further enquiries. This fact, in connection with other singular surrounding circumstances did not reassure me, and I felt sure that some mystery was surely overshadowing the house. By the time I had finished undressing, locked the door, and put the light out, I had forgotten my vision of rest and found myself in an unusual state of wakefulness. I heard distinctly the closing and locking of a door below, and then all was silence.

Under such conditions, with the mind perfectly clear and each sense painfully acute, it is curious how

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sounds will emerge out of the silence, sounds, which, in the day time, would be passed over and altogether neglected. Listening attentively I could hear, clear and shrill, the distant scream of a locomotive as it entered the town. As it stopped, I could but think of the bustle and commotion at the little station, and how all was still and motionless in my room. When it was gone I remained quiet for a long time, marvelling, and somewhat annoyed at this sleeplessness, and wondering whether I had better not get up, strike a light and read. But it was a clear, lucid sleeplessness, void of any improper balance between mind and body.

The tick of my watch became painfully apparent, as it was an invariable custom to place it under my head at night. I heard its muffled, throbbing sensation under the pillow, until I could stand it no longer and got up and put it in a drawer. I had barely settled back upon the bed and my thoughts resumed their excited trend of expectancy and foreboding, when a loud, piercing shriek burst upon the stillness, and reverberated throughout the building. In a moment I was out of bed, and in the succeeding excitement I hardly knew what I did, until I found myself at the door of my friend's room.

Without further ceremony I turned the knob, but found the door locked on the inside. In my excitement I attempted to force it, and, defeated in this, I called out to him to open and admit me. For the only answer I heard a deep, prolonged groan, as though he was in the throes of the most intense agony.

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Without hesitation, I threw myself against the door with such force that it was almost torn from its hinges, and flew inward against a dressing case with such energy that its panels burst out. By the dim light of a lamp, turned low on the hearth, I saw that the violent commotion of my entrance had been unobserved by my friend, whose wild eyes were set upon the ceiling and each breath brought a most heartrending groan.

Just at this moment, one of the old servants, aroused by my breaking into the room, appeared upon the threshold, exhibiting unusual terror. He recognized me at once. "In de name ob Gawd," he exclaimed, and as he glanced at his master his consternation was even greater, for he beheld him in a condition he had never seen before. We quickly turned up the lights, and, without further explanation, devoted ourselves to the strange, pallid form upon the bed. One glance more told us plainly that it was a case demanding immediate medical attention, and the servant was dispatched posthaste for the doctor. As he lived but a short distance away, he quickly responded to the summons, especially as he entertained a deep personal regard for my friend, and seemed familiar with the singular malady with which he was afflicted. At his gentle, but somewhat singular request, I left the room, with the understanding that I should be called when needed.

I repaired to my chamber, dressed myself, and came down upon the portico to await developments. The

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whole thing had burst upon me so suddenly (though not entirely without premonition) that I found myself very nearly unstrung. That unearthly shriek and the singular prostration and condition of my friend, furnished a thrilling, excited train of thought, which I must have indulged for some time, when I was again aroused by the good-natured old doctor beckoning me to join him in the yard. Day had fully dawned by this time, and the birds had started their orchestra in the woodlands. The old physician led the way to a rustic seat down the avenue, and here we sat down and he disclosed to me the outlines of the deep mystery which had led up to the exciting drama of the night. From my intimacy to his patient, and the actual part I had played in the matter, it was natural, he truly said, that I should be mystified and would seek some explanation.

He then recounted a terrible tragedy, which had occurred in this house during the past generation, when the uncle of my friend, in a state of drunken debauch, had wilfully murdered his wife. Through the prominence of the family, the liberal use of money, and under a plea of emotional insanity, he had escaped the vengeance of the outraged law, but the punishment which seemed reserved by Providence was far more effective and terrible than any human law could have been. Though the immediate effect of his crime had caused a reformation in the habits of the uncle, his peace of mind was gone forever and a merciless conscience smote him with an unrelenting iron hand.

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The last dying scream of the murdered wife is said to have continued to echo in the still watches of the night, while her spectral form, it was also positively stated, glided in and out of his chamber, with ceaseless taunts and maledictions. Sleep became impossible, as the haunting vision was ever present, and by this avenging process of mental torture and ceaseless terror, his mind soon became unbalanced and he ended his days in a madhouse.

My friend, the inheritor of his uncle's estates, had scouted the idea of the haunted house and refused to believe that there could be such a moral end in nature. He contended that the Christian religion, respected and revered by the wisest of mankind, was an eternal protest against such ridiculous supernatural forces. But the unfortunate young man was doomed, so the old doctor said, to a fatal legacy of one of the ironies of Nature, which, instead of being a fond and indulgent mother, became an avenger and a merciless torturer. And, as the ways of Providence are inscrutable, it must be accepted that the sins of his ancestors were visited upon his head. The seal of fate was set upon that house and the continued appearance of the wraith of the murdered woman, as well as her dying scream, indicated the perpetuity of the curse placed upon it.

My friend lingered between life and death for months, and when he had recovered his full faculties and contemplated what he considered the actuality of the haunted house, his determined resolution was quick

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and effectual. With his own hand he applied the torch to it, and thus perished and forever disappeared the last vestige of "The Family Skeleton."

I will add, in this connection and in explanation, so far as it goes, that I was subsequently informed that the old doctor was a spiritualist, and that he may have imbued my friend with that strange doctrine. That designing parties should have invented these weird sounds and representations to terrify an innocent mortal, seems too monstrous to believe, and yet I cannot banish such a thought from my mind. At any rate my complete confusion and bewilderment has reached out, in many ways and directions, to find a rational solution of this strange happening.

But another strange feature of this singular occurrence was my next meeting with this unfortunate friend, who had long ago left the country and had been given up as dead by his relations. Eighteen months ago business called me to the Republic of Venezuela. I had gone down into the interior, and, on the border of that vast, treeless plain, known as the Llanos, stopped one evening to lodge at a small village, several days' journey from the coast. The information being given that an American resided in the town, led us to visit him, and, to my utter amazement, it was this old-time friend, whose queer reception and general demeanor, indicated only too clearly that his mind was unbalanced upon any subject pertaining to the past and his native land. Otherwise, he was contented with a small business of shipping cacao, or chocolate

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beans, and was highly esteemed by the people in the village.

That the disappointment and wreck of this once brilliant life were solely the result of a voluntary isolation from the fellowship of convivial and congenial spirits, I could not doubt. He had become a veritable priest of despair, and, as I listened to his scorn, hate and misanthropy, I was forced to think that these were the last echoes of a dying soul.

It is pleasing, however, to place in juxtaposition to this unfortunate man and former friend and school-mate, the life of another quondam collegemate, which was in every detail antipodal to the misanthrope. Though long affliction had made him a prisoner to home, and shut out that broad view of the world afforded by good health, travel and recreation, he was never other than cheerful and hopeful and shed a radiance of pleasure upon all those who came in contact with him. Possessing a brilliant mind and facile pen he occasionally gave to the press articles upon living subjects which were always brimful of good nature and a perennial flow of wit and humor. Indeed, he made sport of the morbid-minded and lampooned those common platitudes as to the degeneracy of the age, with merciless severity. In a reply to Max Nordau, among other things, he said:

"In the middle ages rapine and murder were the order of the day; the upper crust of society was represented by piratical kings and robber barons and even the Crusaders served the devil in God's name. Under

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the rule of the Bourbons of France, as well as the Tudors and Stuarts in England, dissoluteness and debauchery were mere passing faults and the most ardent advocate of 'ye good old times' can scarcely have much to say in favor of a state of society, which made possible the proverb, 'It's a wise child that knows its own father.'"

Reverting to the subject of superstition, from which we have slightly digressed, I have already referred to the belief of the southern negroes in various charms and miracles. It is proverbial that they are easily moved by agitation and especially when this is associated with some unusual manifestation of nature or of man. The knowledge of this fact has given rise to many impostors among that race who have not hesitated to play upon their credulity with a view to extorting the little earnings of the deluded devotees.

As an illustration of how a simple delusion will work upon their superstitious natures, we will relate an occurrence of many years ago among the blacks of middle Georgia. A strange sound was heard to issue from the clouds and, while nothing could be seen to produce it, the tintinnabulation of what might have been a goblin bell was brought to their ears. This sound was heard daily, and at intervals, and the negro sorcerers and soothsayers found it an excellent opportunity to ply their wiles, interpreting the sound as the voice of God, betokening the approach of the millennium. For weeks these prophets kept them wrought up with the firm conviction that the end of

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the world was at hand. The heavenly bell continued to ring—only in the day time—and had been heard at different points, over a wide area of country.

On a certain day the faithful gathered at an old schoolhouse on a hill, when the far-away tinkle of the celestial bell was heard. It stimulated their prayers, and as the sound strangely grew nearer, their moans and lamentations went up in a higher key. There was a hard thump on the roof of the building, and the rattling of a clapper as the bell ceased to strike. Some of the more curious rushed outside to find that it was only a turkey buzzard, around whose neck some one had tied a bell, and in this way the momentous mystery of the celestial sounds was explained.

Another negro prophet sprang up, soon after this, claiming to be the licensed apostle of the Most High, and assuming to have a divine message which he was to communicate to the denizens of the earth. In his holy character he communed with the clouds, and could hear the voices of angels issuing therefrom. He was told, he said, to communicate with his followers, and to tell them that the day of resurrection was near at hand, and that within a few months the Archangel would come down upon a white steed to separate the just from the unjust—the sheep from the goats. Preposterous as were the professions of this extremely ignorant negro, he created a panic among the plantations south of Atlanta, and, for a considerable time the zealots would do no work, but busied

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themselves with preparations for the final coming of the Son of Man. He also professed to perform miracles through charms, and by this cunning ruse accomplished the death of one of his hated relatives, for the murder of whom he was subsequently arrested, tried and sent to the penitentiary. This broke up the following he had established, and he was at once heartily denounced as an unmitigated impostor. Many seers and prophets of this type arose and flourished for a brief time, during our childhood, but they were invariably exposed.

About ten years ago there was added to this black theocracy of the South the stupendous pretensions of a negro woman, called "Scinda," who resided in the levee districts of Mississippi. Like all of her predecessors, Scinda claimed to hold a divine message, which had been reposed in her by the angels as the accredited priestess, and the inspired leader among her people. She was cunning in her methods and when she failed to effect any miraculous cure she would declare that the subject or victim was so filled with evil that he did not possess any divine affinity that could be reached through God's message. It was subsequently ascertained also that she had an extended knowledge of medicine, and while she pretended to use charms and herbs she shrewdly included those drugs known to be efficacious. Through these methods she gained fame as a performer of miracles, while she was careful to make only such prophecies as could be easily modified to meet con-

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tingencies. But she did prophesy that the world would surely come to an end on Christmas of 1887. This was considerably ahead, and gave her an opportunity for quite a harvest of money, as her votaries increased with marvellous rapidity. No divine leader of that race ever before achieved such a following, as she also had some very wise and moral tenets in her faith, denouncing every class of evil and declared that every person should be punished in the other world, according to the degree of their sins and their behavior on earth.

As the time for the fulfillment of her prophecy drew near, her empire widened and her strength waxed stronger, until the eventful day arrived and passed without that dreadful ending of the world. "Scinda" endeavored to hold her sceptre by some clever explanation, but her influence rapidly melted away and she finally disappeared.

No superstition or religion of black sorcery has ever exhibited such vitality as that of Voodoo or Voodoo worship. As it was one of the most prominent superstitions associated with the boyhood of the south—rehearsed perpetually to youth by the negroes—it deserves more than passing notice in these memoirs.

Voodooism has its origin from Africa, where serpent worship has been known as far back as the mythic epoch of man. It is mentioned by Pliny as in vogue among the African slaves that were brought to Rome, where the same rites and ceremonies are described as still existing to this day. Its first home in the West-

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ern world was Hayti, from whence it spread over the West India islands of Porto Rico, Martinique and Cuba, finally entering Louisiana in the time of the French occupation. From there it gradually spread over the southern districts of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. In this translation of the peculiar cult, from its native home on the banks of the Congo, it has lost many of its characteristic features, but one, the worship of the serpent, has survived all of its migrations.

The symbol of Voodooism is the python, but as that serpent is not available on the Western Continent, they have selected the most deadly and venomous of all our reptiles—the rattlesnake. The sacrifices to the serpent were formerly of the most heinous and revolting character, including human beings—usually an infant about a year old—and the orgies were characterized by the most diabolical cannibalism. This is thought to still prevail in some of the remote districts of Hayti, while evidences of it are not wanting in some of the sequestered bayous of Louisiana. This feature of the ceremonies among the southern blacks is supplied by a dog, cock or a pig.

The great secretiveness of the votaries of Voodoo has always proven a barrier to any clear and well defined information as to their strange rites and incantations, as it is extremely doubtful if any white man ever witnessed a genuine Voodoo celebration. What little that is known has been gleaned from old confidential negroes, by more or less accidental words

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dropped to their most trusted "white people." As much as the negro loves money, no inducement has ever been sufficient to extort from him any of the secrets of this ancient worship. His lips are sealed as tightly as though life depended upon it, while it is not improbable that such is the fact, and that his life would pay the penalty for divulging such secrets. The following general facts, however, have been obtained:—that they are serpent worshippers and hold annual convocations on the 24th of June, which corresponds in the Anglican church to St. John's day; that, during a period of several days they go through many strange rites, which include sacrifices, incantations and orgies; that the queen and priestesses are old women, and no man holds authority in their seances; that they claim a sort of apostolic succession for the Voodoo sorcerers, and that none others are possessed of witchcraft except a few neophytes yearly ordained; that the seeresses are familiar with some features of the occult sciences of mesmerism, hypnotism and mind reading, having some similarity to the devil-worship of the East; that they are familiar with the medical virtues and deadly narcotic properties of certain herbs and barks; that the priestesses exercise unbounded influence over their votaries, who will do their bidding if it should lead to the sacrifice of life; that the Evil Eye can be cast upon an offender and direful consequences will follow, unless the "conjur" is removed; that this weird faith is embraced by twenty-five per cent. of the most ignorant negroes

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from North Carolina to the Mexican border, while it exercises a most potent influence over their daily lives, for weal or woe. This idea of being "conjured" or placed under the vengeful spell of the Evil Eye can be encountered everywhere among the negroes, and no memories of boyhood are more vivid than those things rehearsed concerning this baneful influence. The negroes displayed more terror of such an influence than they did of the lash they might receive for disobedience, and from this has arisen the term "possessed," like those afflicted with devils in sacred writ. The most prominent example of this character, which has ever been published, comes from New Orleans.

Oscar J. Dunn was the first lieutenant-governor of Louisiana, with Governor Warmoth as Chief Executive in 1869. He was of pure negro blood, black as a crow, but well educated, for he was a Jamaican. It became rumored among the negro members of the Legislature, then sitting in New Orleans, that Dunn was "conjured," and would die on the night of the 15th of that month. Dunn laughed it to scorn. "Why, you don't think that I believe in such superstitions as this?" he said to some friends who wanted Maria Levaux, the greatest Voodoo queen of her time, consulted. Dunn was a man of powerful frame, about forty years old. His friends became more uneasy as the middle of the month drew nigh. On the fatal night three of them insisted upon sleeping in the room with him. He appreciated the kindly solicitude, but said

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it was needless. They remained with him until quite midnight, and then escorted him home. Adjoining his sleeping-room was another, the two connecting by folding doors. In this room was a bed. The friend who was most anxious, said, "I will sleep here if you will let me." "Certainly," Dunn responded, "I will be glad to have you."

They went to bed. It was then almost one o'clock. The friend had just fallen into a sound sleep when he was startled by what he thought was a shout from Dunn. He sprang up in time to hear him groan heavily. Badly scared, he lighted the gas in both rooms and went to Dunn's bed. He was dead. His face was distorted, and a hand was bleeding. There was nothing upon which it could have been struck to cause a wound.

The death was a profound sensation. Two of the very first physicians (one had been medical director on the staff of General Beauregard during the war) examined the dead man. They found the brain normal, no sign of apoplexy or heart disease. They would never say—if they knew—of what strange stroke this man died. Under the bolster, beneath the pillow on which Dunn had been sleeping for six months, the terrified negroes found a little image of wax, with a pin stuck through the head and another through the body, and on the breast was a strip of paper on which was written in a very fine, faint hand, in French, the words, "O. J. Dunn will surely die on the night of the 15th."

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The mystery of his death was never solved. Voodooism? Quien sabe? Who can tell what it is?

With apologies for this extended dissertation upon Voodooism, we would interpose the excuse that it is a cult without a written history and being so closely allied with boy life, it is a system of faith not unworthy the attention given to it.

But we pass on to another and altogether different subject—social life. The society of ante-bellum days in the South was constructed upon a more or less liberal basis, and was less hampered by those griefs and grievances which characterize it nowadays. I will not attempt to speak for those aristocratic circles, in certain populous centers, which were noted for their exclusiveness, and whose system of caste was based upon blood. This may be defended and justified by its votaries, but it did not represent the true social status in a general sense of that period. The society of old school days was less of a wild flurry at imitation, or the frantic effort to excel in any expensive entertainment or other diversion of social life. The glory and dream of that old period seemed to be an effort to rather appear unostentatious, and if rivalry existed it was in vieing with each other for a more wholesome welcome and unbounded hospitality. Out of the fleeting panorama of the past, but few scenes are more indelibly perfect in memory than those gatherings, especially during the holiday season, when old and young had met for a jolly winter evening. Fires blazed merrily in every grate, or from behind

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huge polished brass firedogs, where there was a desultory cracking and spluttering of hickory logs; he halls and rooms were aglow with lights from great sperm-oil lamps, supported by shining candelabra, or great silver and brass candlesticks; negro servants, dressed daintily and appropriately in linsey frocks, white aprons and embroidered kerchiefs, passed among the throng, with waiters of eggnog, syllabub, zephyr-wafers and assorted cake; the host, with alternating groups of the male guests, repaired anon to the wine closet, where many choice brands were to be had, to warm the soul and increase the flow of convivial spirits; a string band, composed of Ethiopians, occupied the end of the hall, which discoursed many of the airs prevalent in those days, and varied with vocal selections, in which the real darkey excels all of his white imitators on the minstrel stage.

One room would be devoted to the younger set, watched over by their dusky guardians, where many parlor games would be enacted, such as "blind man's bluff," "consequences," "forfeits," "snip-snap-snorum," and various other innocent games peculiar to that time. Another room—usually the large and spacious dining room—was prepared for the older guests, where dancing was the order and which was generally opened with a cotillion and closed with the majestic and inspiring Virginia reel. These social gatherings of the long ago enforced no strict rules as to the character of evening dress, though the ladies were always attired in their prettiest silks and the

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gentlemen in their best broadcloth. It was the custom, when the guest were ready to depart and brave the wintry night, to put into each carriage a heated brick, to keep warm the dainty feet, which were only encased in thin white slippers. The gentlemen, especially those who were not escorting the ladies, adopted other means—usually of a liquid character—to ward off the evils that might otherwise accrue from exposure in the rigorous night air.

While these things were transpiring another *soirée* or reception was being held in the kitchen, presided over by "Black Mammy," in which all of the waitresses, nurses, carriage-drivers and body servants were regaling themselves with the usual large surplus of dainties and drinks that had not been consumed at the "whi' folks" table. There were "young bloods" in those days, who possessed all of the frailties, follies and vices of their modern brothers, but that inglorious habit of "getting full" was indulged at long range—scrupulously remote—from any of the female sex, as the penalty was severe. One misstep, by abject atonement, might be condoned, but a second offense was almost sure to lead to ostracism. Scandal was treated with utmost seriousness, and an investigation would promptly trace out the source from whence it originated, and the result was not infrequently a meeting on the field of honor. As a result there was a more guarded use of words in reference to the fair sex, while their good names were exempt from those contemptible and cowardly insinuations

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which are too frequently tolerated in the modern days. This is intended as no invidious comparison, because that period of our national life was largely a sentimental one, when chivalrous deeds were sublimated above everything, and the "Code" was a diversion which possessed many peculiar charms. The age was also sentimental, and though a great national evil was eradicated, even the Civil war was the outcome of a mere sentiment, which swept over the country, and upset a nation.

In those days we were told that for this and various other things we would enjoy the lasting gratitude of posterity. Indeed, it is one of the happy diversions of nearly all ages and epochs to draw checks upon the bank of posterity. We pass on to them all of our unanswered questions, our unsolved problems, as well as our moral, social, religious and political difficulties. In fact, we dedicate to posterity all of the obstacles we cannot overcome and the perplexities through which we do not see our way. For that vague, indefinite and unknown coming race we, in turn, waged wars, founded colonies, explored Arctic wastes, invented the telegraph, caused social upheavels, laid Atlantic cables, expelled Mexican monarchies, enforced the Monroe doctrine, and gave great impetus to the car of progress. In due course of time, we the children of another and past generation have become that posterity, to whom these legacies were bequeathed. What do we think of the legacies and how much gratitude have we supplied for the inheritance?

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While thanking these ancestors for fighting the Civil war, we, their posterity, must foot the bills in the national debt and the pension rolls. And can we go down on our knees and thank our predecessors for having saddled upon us the "Negro Question," and the specious theories of socialism and anarchy? Have we not been compelled to rewrite their histories and to readjust their philosophical systems? On the whole, we cannot be expected to acknowledge our obligations with unlimited or unmixed fervor.

One of the greatest pleasures experienced by a traveller, as he makes his way through a new country, is to pause on the green summit of some lofty hill and retrace the windings of his previous course. He sees the tangled forest depths, through which he toiled with so much painful effort, and the leafy valley, where he lingered among the buds and blossoms and the warble of birds; he follows the shining stream, which cheered him for many a league with the sparkle of its waters; he recalls the thorny waste over which he dragged his bleeding feet; he espies the bower, with its scented wreaths of trailing rose and woodbine, where he allowed himself a brief repose; and he sums up his various experiences with a grateful sense that he is the better and the stronger for them, with a feeling that even those which seemed harshest and most austere have, by some strange alchemy, been converted into sweet felicities. The wounded feet have been healed; the tired limbs have recovered their vigor; he remembers only the cool glades, and the

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haunted avenues of the forest; the thorn bushes of the wilderness have ceased to be a terror to him, while he still feels the freshness and balm of the breezes that blow across its open space; his soul, once so small, has expanded until it is able to embrace the wide consciousness of all the magical region, through which he has steadily plodded; its wonderful vision flits before his eyes, its sound of music is in his ear, its mystery is in his blood. "This is life," he says to himself, "and these are mine, while life is mine."

In the same way, when we arrive at certain stages of our earthly pilgrimages, we find it good and useful to take a retrospect of the past and gaze at will through the long vista of far-off years. Thus we pass idly over the successes and wrecks of our lives. Like Bunyan's pilgrim, as we go forward, we leave so much of our burden behind us that our step grows lighter, as the road lengthens. The years have brought with them many failures and disappointments, many moods of anguish and bitterness, many betrayals and deceits. But, from the vantage ground afar off, we look back upon these disorders and irregularities of Nature without pain, as they narrow down to a space too small for measurement. The trouble, which cuts like a knife to-day, loses much of its edge within a week, and in six months is blunted quiet. The lava flood issues from the womb of the volcano, hissing and seething, a stream of molten fire; but before long it cools and hardens and covers the surface with fair vegetation and the smile of flowers. And, in like manner, over

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the burning tracts of our past, as the fires of passion die out, verdure and blossoms grow and multiply until we can see but the faintest signs of what once has been, when, in later years, we survey the progress of our lives.

There are valleys of shadows, no doubt, but it is the sunlit hill-tops that catch the gaze and carry us straight back into those joyful moods, when we stared at an imaginary world—at the golden towers and shining battlements of El Dorado, not knowing that we were staring at a vision of our own creation. But it was excellent to have such dreams, and a still more excellent thing that we are able to recall them. I do not doubt that Moses, on the summit of Pisgah, turned awhile from the vision of the Promised Land, to retrace the scene of his wanderings with the Children of Israel, and gratefully praise heaven for the gifts of manna and the quail. Thus tenderly does God treat us when, as the sun goes down, we halt in our life march, and turning Eastward, wistfully eye the route we have travelled over, peer through the gathering mists and behold divine love brooding over those far-off years of "Old School Days."

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CHAPTER XII.

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THE following excerpts are taken from a pamphlet compiled by Col. Richard Malcolm Johnston, and issued in 1896, by the United States Bureau of Education. I was unfamiliar with the existence of such a publication until my own facts had been gathered and typewritten. The data collected by Colonel Johnston, however, is so interesting and comprehensive, as well as in line with my own memoirs, that the following extracts will be found appropriate and readable. It is proper to say, however, that the period described by Colonel Johnston antedates the epoch comprehended in my own work, and, consequently, there are many material differences in the conditions and boyhood of the two epochs. However, the scholarly compilation of "Old Field Schools" furnishes many analogous and similar episodes to the present memoirs, and, with apologies to the distinguished Georgian, we will incorporate into the close of our work many extracts from his pamphlet.

ADMIXTURE OF CLASSES.

Man cannot live alone. Even Timon of Athens

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must occasionally go away from home in order to find an audience, to make known the contempt he claimed to feel for mankind. Whatever the degrees of an individual's understanding and culture, if he cannot find his equals to associate with, he will be drawn to his neighbors, however far his inferiors in these gifts. And so, from the beginning, the two ranks of this rural region coalesced, a fact which, more than any other, contributed to make the state what it became by the period of 1861. In a community so constituted, whatever was marked in individualities, must be brought forth in neighborhood intercourse that was untrammelled, except by unwritten laws, instinctive in all minds. No man ever felt his freedom more heartily than the rustic of middle Georgia a century ago. His cultivated neighbor, away from convenient proximity to his own peers, sought his society, made him his friend, often his confidant and adviser. He learned his speech and in time loved to speak it. Each imparted and received. Associations of this sort are regulated by influences which it is not well to resist. Among these, negro slavery exerted its own peculiar influence. The humblest white man could have no apprehension of falling upon any lower scale, therefore, his ambitions, whatever they might be, were unfettered. It was during that early period of fifty years ago that were developed those numerous striking individualities which afterwards became themes for the character-sketching done in that region more than in any other of like extent in the whole

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South. A section so fecund in elements contributing to prosperous, happy existence, was populated with much rapidity. Seventy years ago the voting population of some of those counties was far above what it is now, counting only the whites. Quick, reckless felling of forests, rushing, appalling, unskillful cultivation of rolling lands, led to their speedy exhaustion. Those of the inhabitants most eager for the accumulation of riches and most adventurous of spirit, disposing of their homesteads for small prices to those content to remain, followed not far behind the Indians, whom they drove farther and farther west.

To one who remembers the conditions of the former society it is pleasant to recall the neighborliness, the oft warm affectionateness, which, except among mean people (and these are in every community), generally obtained. Men of both ranks, none of whom were very rich, and none poor, intermingled with little reserve. Not seldom they sat at one another's boards, watched at one another's suffering bedsides, helped to bury one another's dead, when tears and strengthening words were alike grateful and consolatory.

EARLY EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS.

It is probable that not one of these settlers had received an education, beyond what could be gotten at the country and village school, in the states from which they had immigrated. They were less informed in text books and other reading than were their parents

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before the War of Independence. Differences in book knowledge, therefore, among those Georgians were less marked than those in any other particular, and these depended on the habits of vigorous, thoughtful minds, of endeavoring to supplement trifling school requirements with the study of the few standard books within their reach.

If school keeping in rural districts, during colonial and revolutionary periods, was conducted within narrow circumstances, it must be more so in new remote settlements. If there had been entirely competent teachers, boys, even girls, could not be spared from domestic work long enough to give—and that in intervals—more than two or three years' attendance at school; for gentlewomen and their daughters, like the rest, cut and sewed upon garments made of flax, wool and cotton, produced, spun and woven at home, while their husbands and sons felled the woods, tended the fields and harvested the crops. In the most genteel families, along with proper morals, children learned good manners and were encouraged to read in the few choice books brought with them from the old homes. Some could recite from ancient English and Scotch ballads, learned by their parents in peaceful and less exigent conditions. But education in school books was made, using a homely phrase, to "shift" for itself. The ways in which this was done, if described with much circumstantiality, would make a long and somewhat unique record in the annals of Georgia's foretime.

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SCHOOLMASTERS.

To any middle-aged Georgian, the old field school-master of his childhood, as he now recalls him, seems to have been somewhat of a myth, or at least a relic of a long passed, decedent race, never existing except in a few individuals, unlike any others of human mould, appearing, during periods, in rural communities, bringing in a red-spotted bandana handkerchief his household goods, and in his tall, whitish-furred, long-experienced hat, a sheet of foolscap on which was set down what he called his "school articles." A rather reticent man was he to begin with, generally serious, sometimes even sad-looking, as if he had been a seeker of things occult and was not content with the results of his quest. Within some months, seldom completing the year, with the same bandana and hat, noiseless as he had come, he went his way. Generally he was unmarried, or, what was not so very far different, followed by a wife as unique-looking as himself, if possible some nearer a blank, who had never had the heart to increase the family any further. After his departure came on another, who might be larger and might be smaller, who might be fairer and might be browner, who might be more pronounced in manner and speech, and might be less, but who had the distinctive marks that were worn by no other people under the sun.

Now the idea that a native-born citizen, competent to instruct children, would have been content to under-

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take such a work, was not entertained. Somehow, keeping a school was regarded as at the bottom on the list of vocations, fit only for those who are not qualified for any other; who, if thus qualified, would never think of thus degrading themselves, and who, in view of the poverty of repute attending this last resort for the exercise of manly endeavor, deemed it well to go away from the place that knew them, and set up among strangers. As soon as he became well known, it seemed expedient for him, like Joe, of "Tom All-Alones" in Dickens' "Bleak House," to "move on."

SCHOOLHOUSES.

A place was selected on the edge of a wood, and a field turned out to fallow, sufficiently central, hard by a spring of purest fresh water, a log house was put up, say 25 x 30 feet, with one door and a couple of windows and shelves, with benches along the unceiled walls, and the session began. Most families breakfasted about sunrise, and a brisk walk of three-quarters of an hour brought even the remotest dwellers to the early opening. The one who happened to reach the schoolhouse first on wintry mornings kindled a fire. This was before the date of Lucifer matches. In winter half burned logs were so disposed beneath ashes in the huge fireplaces as to preserve fire through the night, which was quickly rekindled by the aid of pine knots always on hand. To provide against failure, the master and some of the larger boys carried

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a small piece of rotten wood—punk—obtained from a decayed oak, which, being held under a flint stone and struck with a blade of a steel knife, produced sparks, igniting the wood. There was seldom any suffering from cold.

At noon a recess of two hours was allowed for dinner and sports. On days when the sun shone, the hour was made known by its reaching a mark on the floor near the door, or one of the window sills. In cloudy weather, it was guessed at. The idea of a schoolmaster owning a watch did not enter anybody's mind. When the day was done, dismissal was out and out. There was no keepings-in at noon or evening tide. Each day had its history and no more; whatever was done, was done for all henceforth—recitations, good or bad—punishments, big or little—became things of the past, though their likes were sure to be enacted on every day thereafter. The master went silently into the house where he boarded, and the pupils, boys and girls, whipped and unwhipped, turning their backs upon everything, journeyed leisurely along, boys anon rallying one another on the day's misadventures, personal and vicarious, and the girls behind laughing, occasionally lingering to gather and weave into nosegays, wild flowers, that, in all seasons, except the depth of winter, bordered their way along the roads and lanes.

IN THE SCHOOLROOM.

The fashion of studying aloud in schools, now so

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curious to recall, did not produce the confusion which those not accustomed to it would suppose. Besides the natural desire to avoid punishment, rivalries were very often active, particularly among girls, and during the time devoted wholly to study, there were few who did not make reasonable effort to prepare for recitation. Spellers, readers, geographies, grammarians, getters-by-heart, all except cipherers, each in his or her own tongue and tone, raised to height sufficient to be clearly distinguished from others by individual ears, filled the room and several square rods of circumambient space outside. In this while, the master, deaf to the various multitudinous sounds, sat in his chair, sometimes watching for a silent tongue, at others, with lack-lustre eyes gazing through the door into the world beyond, perhaps musing when and where, if ever in his life, this toiling, fighting, migratory, isolated and about friendless career would find respite.

Pupils stood while reciting. In spelling and reading, except with beginners, the cases were a few, seldom more than two or three in a study, arranged according to the age and degree of advancement, boys and girls mingling together. Dread of the ridicule attached to the foot of the class prompted every one to strive to avoid it. Many a blush painted the cheek and many a tear dimmed the eye of a girl while descending to this position of dishonor. The effect was benign. Good spelling, particularly among the girls, was the rule in nearly every school. Seldom did any among half a dozen in the lead make changes of

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place. These were mainly below, increasing in frequency towards the end. The head was lost generally by accident, or momentary negligence of keeping on the alert, and it required like default to make another change in that quarter.

In reading, excellence was on a scale very far lower. It was taught after a fashion solemn and formal, sometimes ludicrously so. With the master, the sentiment seemed that after one rose from spelling and reading, one must be taught to feel that what was printed in books had acquired beyond spoken words, dignity to which readers must pay worshipful respect, pronouncing in measured, solemn flow. Many an old man, in after years, would rehearse in lengthened, sepulchral monotone his school rendering of those deeply affecting fables in Webster's Elementary Spelling Book: "The Partial Judge," "The Boy that Stole Apples," "Old Dog Tray," "The Country Maid and her Milk Pail," with illustrations, and contend these latter to be the last, highest, and forever hereafter unsurpassable pinnacle of pictorial art.

When the boys and girls became old enough to take serious interest in the meaning of what they read they went to the few romances to be found here and there in the neighborhood, such as "The Children of the Abbey," "Mysteries of Udolpho," "Thaddeus of Warsaw," and "Scottish Chiefs." It was always pleasant to feel and afterwards to remember the impressions made upon young, simple minds by these books, then more than half believed to contain veri-

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table chronicles of bravest men and loveliest women. They served purposes most benign. They largely contributed to the production of pure and generous aspirations, to the development of good manhood and good womanhood, each sex endeavoring and hoping, if not to equal, at least to approximate exalted ideals, as near as was possible in existing limitations. In after years, elderly ladies, who had long ceased to read novels of any sort, when hearing young people praising later works of the kind, would never be made to believe that they could be compared favorably with those which, in their own young day, drew so many tears from their eyes, and prompted so fondly to duty. These benign influences did not cease with experience of labor and cares and vicissitudes; they assisted throughout life, in imparting strength, steadfast in continuance at their work and to fortitude in the enduring of misfortune.

MEMORIZING.

One practice in these schools was so useful that, to the writer, it seems a misfortune that it did not obtain in academies, afterwards established, and that it was ever dropped from those of any grade. This was "getting-by-heart" and reciting a number of printed lines every day with, more often without, reference to their meaning. Omission of this exercise is the more strange, since persons familiar with the Greeks and Romans know, that among them, it was

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regarded of first importance in the education of boys. The poet, Horace, in his "Ad Augustum," tells how he was beaten, when a little child, by his master, Orbilius Pupilus, for unsatisfactory rehearsal of a crude translation of the *Odyssey* by Livius Andronicus. It appears afterwards that he was required to do the same with the *Iliad*.

In the Old Field Schools, not a pupil who could read at all (except a cipherer advanced high enough to be regarded above it) was excluded from the daily exercise. Perhaps non-understanding of the words had its own special advantage in quickening verbal memory and making it retentive. This was evinced in the Friday evening declamations, which it was understood that parents and other friends might attend when they chose. It was noteworthy how many boys learned to declaim well. Fortunate it was, perhaps, that the teacher was never a speaker himself, did not know the meaning of the word elocution and had never heard of the methods, since become common, of imparting special instruction in it. Boys had this advantage, that there were no models below which imitators are always apt to fall, by losing their own individuality, and finding it impossible to acquire another's. Stimulus to success was imparted by desire of praise and apprehension of ridicule from parents, friends, school-mates and most particularly, sweethearts. Youthful orators declaimed in couples or singly, in adjoining woods, selections from masterpieces found in speech books, notably one entitled the "Columbian Orator."

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Practice upon practice enabled some lads, of unusually good understanding, sons of the better class, to render these pieces with a grace and spirit intensely interesting, and were not infrequently the beginning of a career that made the young orators famous in after years. The idea of prompting a speaker never occurred to teacher or pupil. The habit of daily memorizing made such help needless. The dull tongue of a dull mind might draw words of passionate, fiery speech in such funeral style as to suggest the words of Theseus, at the grief of poor Pyramus, in "Midsummer Night's Dream." "This passion and the death of a dear friend would go near to make a man look sad." As it was, it became sometime needful in the audience to suppress loud laughter, with coughing and stuffing of mouths with handkerchiefs; but the words, whether accurately pronounced or not, were there, with every syllable which, when once learned, no more than his A B C's could be forgotten. The more one reflects upon what is known as the humorous in character sketching, the more he is apt to refer it, in a large measure, to the innocent, often pathetic, careenings of narrow understandings to exhibit themselves beyond their limitations. In this region, not very long back, numbers of persons, men and women, when far advanced in age, could recite many of the pieces memorized in childhood. It was not very uncommon with college students, half a century ago, who, after writing a piece requiring half an hour for delivery, rendered it, with entire accuracy, after one reading.

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DISCIPLINE.

The young of that generation had been assiduously trained in one special virtue, deviating from whose observance had never a hope of toleration. That was absolute, unquestioning obedience to authority. Youth—youth advanced to nineteen or twenty—childhood, even infancy, learned from the beginning that disobedience had, and that it could have but one end—punishment, prompt and according to circumstances more or less condign. Delinquents knew that as sure as the morrow's sunrise would follow the sunset of to-day, punishment would succeed upon wanton disobedience. This punishment was corporal. It was not very often preceded nor accompanied by remonstrance. It did its work without hesitation, and usually without anger; and the culprit, after infliction, easily resumed the position he held before in parental affection. Parents, with few exceptions, seemed to regard corporal punishment as the only really effectual discipline for children, particularly for boys, as they did not hesitate to employ it whenever necessary, even up to incipient manhood. The idea, as all students in the history of mankind know, was not new. When and where it began in schools has not come down. We know that it was in at least one of the schools of Falerii, in the time of Camillus, centuries before Christ, when the boys, sons of the principal citizens, were led by their master to the be-

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sieging general, who, in horror of the treachery, had him stripped, bound, and driven back by his pupils with rods such as he was accustomed to belabor their backs. The rod produces an effect which terminates in itself. A child is afraid of being whipped, and gets its task and there is an end of it. And so the school-master, seldom cruel by nature, to slenderly boys, and by too many odds and ends made up in his being to take actual delight in sight of pain, finding himself absolute monarch over a collection of unloving and unloyal subjects, during eight and ten hours a day, assured in his mind that the average boy would not perform his task without compulsion, kept himself supplied with seasoned hickory switches, and plied them with more or less rigor, and according to circumstances. These circumstances were the varying conditions of his own temper, and what was expected of him by parents and others in the world outside. Not one of these was counted upon whipping of some sort with sufficient frequency and proper severity. The teacher's admonition about sparing the rod was accepted unanimously. Even a good boy, unless his body and legs were too little or too frail to endure it, must be whipped occasionally by way of prevention. Whipping was so good and precious a thing in itself that it would seem a hardship for even a good boy to be allowed to grow up without personal experience of its benign efficiency. As for disgrace in such punishments, in the case of boys, nobody dreamed that any sort attached to it, although girls

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felt it keenly. So resentment, in after years, seldom had place in men's recollection of schoolboy scenes. One case only used to be told. One day in the town of Milledgeville, Ga., a young man, upwards of thirty, while sitting on a sidewalk before a tavern, observed a strange looking, rather elderly gentleman passing by. Attracted by his looks and gait, after some moments, he arose and followed him. Overtaking him, he asked him if his name was Nahum G——, and if he ever kept a school in the county of Hancock. Answer being in the affirmative:

"In that case," said the youth, "I owe you a debt that has been standing ever since. My name is Seymour B——. Fifteen years ago you whipped me for nothing, and I then took an oath that if I should live to be big enough, and meet you, I'd pay you back."

Then he knocked him down. The gentleman, rising, said:

"Well, young man, you bear malice right along; are you satisfied?"

"Entirely. You'll discharge me of the interest, I've no doubt. We are even. Good day."

This case was an exceptional one, for this school discipline, however absurd and needlessly rigorous, was not often marked by cruelty or very much asperity of temper. Habit certainly obtunded the sympathy with which men might have been born, and so habit served to subdue much of the wrath liable to be indulged against daily derelictions, real and imaginary.

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GAMES.

Games in these schools were as hearty as simple. Girls, who always played apart, were fond of "jumping the rope," two holding the ends at a distance of about half its length, twirling it on high and beneath rapidly, while, as it struck the ground, one or more standing in the middle of the space between, leaped or hopped over. Victory was adjudged to her who did so oftenest without impeding the revolution.

Colonel Johnston's memoirs then describe a number of games, peculiar to girls, such as "checks," "hopscotch," "blindfold," "chicamy-chicamy-craney-crow," "grind the bottle," or "puss in the corner," "prisoner's base," "hide-and-seek," "hide the switch," "old sister Phœbe," "Miley Bright," etc., of which we give the last one, known as "Williamson Trimbletoe."

In this game the children each place the middle finger of one hand in a circle, upon some object, a block, if out of doors, on someone's knee if within, and one with her forefinger, beginning with her own middle finger, made the circle of touching all alternately in sequence, word by word, of the following rhyme:

*"Williamson Trimbletoe,
He's a good fisherman;
Catches his hens,
And puts them in pens;*

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*Some lay eggs and some lay none,
Wire, brier, limber-lock,
Sits and sings 'til 12 o'clock;
The clock run down,
The mouse run 'round,
O-u-t spells out—
AND BEGONE."*

At that instant all except the one upon whose finger the last word fell, flew away—while she, personating "Williamson Trimbletoe," pursued the chickens, and, catching one by one, conveyed her to the pen. There was neither advantage or disadvantage to the one counting, as her own finger was in equal chance with the others in escaping the final word.

BOYS' GAMES.

Ball being the favorite sport of boys of the old time, quite a number of these are given, from which the following are selected:

TOWN BALL.—Baseball has certainly carried batting, particularly catching, to a degree beyond any attained in old-time town ball; but for heartiness in enjoyment of sport, and sport only, for healthfulness of activities, eager but never overstrained, for harmlessness of accidents, impossible to become dangerous or seriously painful, for innocence in triumphs, in victories, and moderation of discomfitures in defeats, the younger is far behind the one it supplanted. Parties

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were never continuous in constituent elements. Two lads of equal or approximate fame, after casting at "cross and pile" (throwing three times on high a paddle with a cross on one side and guessing at the fall) for first choice, selection of followers was made alternately from oldest to the very youngest, so that those who were rivals to-day might be comrades to-morrow. Each had its *ins* directly following the other. Losses were incurred by catching from behind the ball missed by the striker, or in its flight upon the field from stroke of the paddle, or hitting the runner between the bases. An hour or so was generally sufficient for each party to enjoy its *ins*. This most exciting period in this game was when the *ins* were reduced to one. In that emergency, if he could make as many as three rounds, he had liberty to call in one of his party.

At such a time he called upon one to run in his place, while he stood and rested between the strokes. If the ball was caught in the air, or after the first rebound, or if the runner was hit with it on the circuit, or it was thrown and reached *home* before the circuit was completed, the striker went out. These contingencies had to be faced three times consecutively. It not infrequently occurred that a vigorous boy who used a round, heavy bat instead of the paddle, cast the ball with such momentum and in such unexpected direction as to achieve success.

BULL PEN.—In this, a space about twenty yards square was chosen, into which one of the parties en-

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tered, while four of the others occupied the corners. The ball was thrown from one to another along the sides, and after the round was made and then passed from the first diagonally across to the third, and it was said to be "hot." These four, without any fixed order of sequence, but according to probable chances of success, cast the ball at those in the pen. If it missed it counted for naught; if it hit, he and his comrades took to flight when an insider threw the ball at one of them; if he hit, the latter was out and the one stricken restored. The art of throwing and dodging, rendered keen by much practice, made this game often intensely interesting, both to parties and beholders, particularly so when the actors were reduced to two, one running from base to base, seeking opportunities, and the other keeping it at as great a distance as possible, the two procrastinating the result sometimes for half an hour.

SOCKET.—This game was resorted to only occasionally, and when time was too short for the others. The ball was cast aloft, and on return, whoever got it threw it at his next neighbor, and this was repeated without cessation of any sort until all were weary. It was a sort of what was called a free fight, without rule or reckoning.

The balls used in these games were of domestic make, with woolen threads, and tightly covered with buckskin. Lucky and envied was the boy who, from a worn rubber shoe, a thing seldom used, got cuttings to substitute for thread. This writer easily recalls

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the first introduction of those of solid rubber, gotten at the stores, but this was at the village academy to be referred to hereafter.

(Other games are here described in detail, such as "cat," "jumping," "ring marbles," "knucks," "leap-frog," "tag," "clapping hands," "mumble-peg," "shinney" and "lap-jacket," nearly all of which are possessed of great tenacity of life, as they are still in vogue among boys of to-day.)

DRESS.

Dress of school children was almost wholly of home produce and make. Even daughters of people of the better sort, if occasionally they wore gowns of calico or gingham, usually went to school in those of domestic fabric so manufactured and made as to be hardy, if at all, less slightly. The arts of spinning, weaving and dyeing were carried to a high degree of culture. People of humble means did this sort themselves, but those above them, while all the spinning, reeling and warping were done at home, had most of their weaving and dyeing done by professionals, some of whose work, yet preserved in old family chests, is surprisingly handsome. These professionals, styled weavers, were usually women, who, failing to marry while in their teens, devoted themselves to these arts and indulged, in high pride, in the number and urgency of demands made upon them throughout a large circle of acquaintances, to repair to their homes

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for jobs that impatiently awaited them. For these ladies lived not at home, except during brief intervals, while working for themselves and other members of their own families; but in all seasons, spring, summer, fall and winter, sojourned at the houses of one and another of their neighbors. At the end of their promised days they went on to other engagements. At these houses they were as welcome and as well treated as the governor's wife would have been. Preliminaries to enter into the out-houses, where the loom was kept, were precise and elaborate—selection of purest, best thread from hanks, mixings of indigo, walnut, madder and other dye stuffs, superintending dyeing pots, examinations of looms, sleighs, shuttles, spindles and reed spools, and readjusting of every blessed thing to absolute satisfaction. When the long warp was carefully wrapped around the beam, the sleighs and treadles properly adjusted, the conscious weaver mounted upon the stool as proudly as Queen Elizabeth bestrode her war steed on Tewksbury Plain. Many of the stripes woven by these experts were notably handsome and held their brightness through long periods of laundering. In gowns made by these, girls attended school; underwear, of material raised at home, were, when well laundered, as nice as those woven in Northern looms. Boys' wear was of stouter materials, those for winter entirely of wool. The summer wear received a bright yellow color from a dye made from copperas; the winter as fine a brown from the bark of a walnut, or woven from mixed threads of

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white and dark wool. Little girls wore short frocks, with pantalets. Boys wore jackets, and trousers reaching to the feet. The present fashion of short trousers and stockings was not then known. Shoes, in almost all instances, except those for Sunday use, were made by the neighboring cobbler, of leather tanned at the village tanyard, from hides of beasts slain on the several plantations; but, during six months, from April to November, all boys, without exception, went barefooted. A boy was eager to doff his shoes in the spring and reluctant to resume them in the fall. This feeling prevailed, notwithstanding the "stumped toes," toe itchings and stone bruises, to which they were constantly liable and from which they frequently suffered. One element in their hostility to their use when not needed for protection in inclement weather, was that their shoes were made, each pair, on the same last. This was done for the sake of economy, as daily exchanging from left to right and from right to left secured longer duration and postponed the pleasure derived from the possession of a new pair. Seldom was a sock worn that was not knit at home from cotton or wool. The same was the case with most of the stockings. The girls wore, for head covering, what was afterwards known as sunbonnets, while the boys' hats, when there was no hatter in the neighborhood, were of woolen stuff and purchased at the store.

EXHIBITIONS.

Whenever a master remained until the end of the

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spring term, it closed with an examination of the pupils on the last day, and what was called an "exhibition" at night. A rude platform was built in front of the door, and an arbor, covered with branches of trees, extended far out. Many hundreds attended the examinations, and many more the exhibition. To the latter, people came from all distances, up to ten and fifteen miles, often to the number of two or three thousand, and it was curious to see the interest taken in the exercises by persons by whom these were the only histrionic performances ever witnessed. A farce—say "Box and Cox," and one or two others of like character—was brought out, in a style that certainly was unique in the history of the stage. Women's parts, as in the old English drama, were taken by boys. The idea seemed to be that dresses, talk and movements should be as unnatural, as eccentric and as extravagant as possible. No occasion in that rural region brought more hearty enjoyment to the vast crowds assembled to honor it.

HOLIDAYS.

Holidays, not infrequent in the beginning, became less so with the lapse of time. In the early settlements of the country the religious sentiment, as is always the case in periods after a long war, except among women, was not high. Religious meeting-houses were few, and such as were had not many professing male members. Leading families, for the most part, partic-

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ularly those from Virginia, had been members of the Episcopal Church, but these, for lack of bishop and clergymen, gradually fell away. Besides, this organization being of British origin, suffered prejudice for that reason. Dancing and playing cards were not regarded as immoral, and at evening parties of pleasure the former was freely practiced. These were frequent, because the settlers, despite their intense energy, were fully sensible of the value and importance of leisure and reunions. Presbyterians were almost none; but Baptists and Methodist clergymen in time appeared, many of whom, though not liberally educated, were of much ability and labored with zeal and success in the cause of Christian revival. For a considerable time, respite, both for school children and negroes, was had on occasion of the most noted church festivals. But now, out of the joint hostility, feasts, as Easter, Whitsuntide, Ascension, Epiphany, began to be omitted, and, after some years, were dropped from the mind as they had ceased to be mentioned by the tongue, and, except by a few, their recurrence became unnoticed.

Yet boys were unanimous against curtailment of what long prescription seemed to them ought to have rendered inviolate. Indulgence, gradually fallen into disuse outside, a master granted or not according to his notions or the will of parents in that behalf. He was suspected of having no special aversion to it, but it was important to the security of his position to appear otherwise, profess reluctance, but at the same

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time intimate that he would be guided by circumstances. A few, who, like Peggoty's husband, were "very near," grudged a day off from services for which they were paid a whole dollar a month, but the majority were indifferent, and so the schoolmaster gave it sometimes, and sometimes did not. Another ground for hesitation, with a leaning to the side of mercy, was revolving in his mind the degree of eagerness on the part of his boy scholars in any special case, and that their strength and resolution to have it gratified, for there was one last resort for the brave and the desperate of which he well knew that, however resolute in spirit and able of body, it behooved to beware—the "turn outs." Some account of this ought not to be omitted from these sketches.

TURN-OUTS.

It would not be easy to find the original of what, in our day, was admitted to be fully excusable in school-boys, in pressing emergencies, to fall back upon an inalienable reserved right of revolution, which, though brief, was decisive. People, old people, even "near people," did not gainsay exercise of this right, provided it was availed of according to established usages and within set limitations. If the sentiment for a holiday was unanimous, or sufficiently approximate to unanimity, to discourage like toryism on the part of the minority, by appointment meeting at the school-house earlier than usual in the morning, barred the

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building against the master's entrance. While no violence to his person was allowed, yet neither was he expected to be too damaging in his siege of property belonging to other people, who might not feel like putting in expensive repairs. Forcing a door lock or a window hook would be tolerated, but not breaking off things generally. Nor was unreasonably long time allowed the besieger to be wasted in endeavor. If he could overcome obstruction and effect entrance, the insurrection dissolved instantly and all went to the day's work with no other feeling than disappointment at failure to compass an end entirely legitimate. In case he could not, holiday was granted with cheerful acquiescence. The most acceptable, indeed, the most common way of celebrating the occasion was with a treat to the master. A messenger was dispatched to the nearest place where could be gotten a jug of honest whiskey, which the master and the boys discussed. Afterwards they all went their several ways satisfied, the chief sometimes to exuberance with the last result of the day's doings.

THE PASSING.

The period, during which these primitive schoolmasters had sway, has been referred to always with peculiar interest, not only with those to whom it has come down by tradition, but especially among those who had experience of their doings of many kinds. There was something pathetic in the silence with which

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they disappeared. Precisely whence they came, in the beginning, was not generally known, because seldom inquired about. The same with their going, in which was some shade of melancholy, as men thought of the slender chances before such wanderers of betterment in their conditions. Instances were almost none when their punishments, slight or rigorous, were remembered with resentment, and nobody, parent or pupil, but wished to them as much prosperity as might come within their reach, hardly hoping that it could be otherwise than extremely moderate. They seemed to illustrate Darwin's maxim of the survival of the fittest, and, like the weakest in lower animal existences, gradually subsided into extinction or undiscoverable and never-investigated retirement. This period of the pedagogy of that region passed not without leaving some salutary results. Any system, however crude, is better than no system. On the confines of existences, so far different from each other, it was as indispensable as elsewhere to get some instruction, at least in elementary education. This was all that was at first sought. Neglect of it had been too long already amid the hardships of one long war and threatenings of another. To read, write, become familiar with elementary rules in numbers, and get some acquaintance with forms of polite speech, these must be gotten after a fashion of some sort from the only persons who came forward to undertake the task of imparting. Weaklings as these generally were, need of subsistence which they were incompetent to obtain out of other

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vocations, continuance of endeavors to enhance their fitness for this, their only calling, with pressure from outside, begot in time a familiarity with its duties which, if not satisfactory, was tolerable. The very crudeness habitually breaking out in those old school-houses, contrasted with those in which good sense, manners, and tastes were hereditary, served as a foil to make the latter more clearly recognized and more easily practiced. Superadded to this, the habit of entire obedience to authority however trifling dignity, but taught to be of equal force with that by which it was delegated, tended strongly to the development of generous manhood, of neighborly kindness, of lifelong friendship, of good citizenship. In a community situated far from cultured circles, activities sometimes too ardent, even degrees of lawlessness must exist. Among the systems pretending to repress them among the young, old field schools, despite their eccentricities, made their one contribution, and it was respectable. Their glaring imperfections intensified the sense of need of something better, and expedited their introduction.

BOYS' FIELD SPORTS.

Out of school, children whose parents were of whatever degree of property holding, were indulged in with holidays of reasonable frequency. Almost any Saturday a boy with his fishing rod or with his gun and three or four hounds would meet his likes, simi-

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larly attended, and spend the day along the margin of a creek or within fields and woods. Lesser game, for a long time, continued plentiful, such as squirrels, rabbits, opossum, raccoons, quail, field larks and particularly doves by the thousands. Any family, however humble, would have been ashamed to be regarded so poor as not to afford to keep a gun and several hounds. Boys who were too young to handle guns, or follow hounds afar, used to resort to devices for taking birds.

TRAPS.

Perhaps never a Georgia boy, when come to seven or eight years, failed to have his one or more traps for catching birds. If he was lame or an invalid, a trap must be built for him and set somewhere in the meadow or near the woodside. It was constructed of laths of about three feet in length, for the four at the bottom, two inches wide, and a quarter of an inch thick, decreasing in length for about ten inches. It was set by three sticks called triggers, one long and two short, forming, when joined, the figure four, placed horizontally with the stem at the bottom. Around this stem and beneath was strewn the bait, grains of corn, oats, meal, and wheat. A very light touch sprang the trigger and the trap came down. The captive was taken out at the top, by removal of the short laths in sufficient numbers to allow the insertion of the hand and arm. Results from such huntings were very

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far from compensation for the work done in their behalf, but they were ever hopeful and expected to do better the next time. They were far more satisfactory, in the case of one bird in particular, the quail, called the "partridge." Going in flocks, ingenuity was called upon to frame a trap so as to get all, which would certainly follow the getting of the first. The trap for this purpose was called a "coup." It was similarly constructed, possibly somewhat heavier. Instead of triggers, its delusion was compassed by a tunnel, wide and horizontal at the opening, about a foot from the coup, and after reaching it, ascending and narrowing until it opened rather abruptly within, by an aperture of size to easily admit one bird and no more. Grain was scattered in confusion about the coup, more so in the opening, and extending through the tunnel. The leader of the flock passed along the wide, gentle slope, feeding as he went, the rest eagerly following. Some grains were scattered upon the ground within in order to hinder apprehension from arising until all were inside. In this condition it never occurred to them to attempt egress from the same route by which they had entered. The tunnel's opening inside being abrupt and darkened, the captive vainly strove to pass through the spaces in the side and roof of the coup.

HUNTING WITH HOUNDS AND GUN.

The hunting of squirrels and rabbits, doubtless, was about the same in all other regions where the animals

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abound. It was pursued by half-grown lads, regarded not yet old enough to overcome the awkward difficulties in chasing, such as only could be taken in the night; or, as in the case of a fox, at early dawn and on horseback. Many a vain petition to venture, at least upon the former, was presented to mothers, and many a boy was made happy by the coming of the time when it was deemed not too imprudent to grant it.

RACCOON HUNTING.

Seldom was a young boy allowed to go upon a hunt of the raccoon. It is a beast of considerable fleetness, extremely wily, and combative to the last degree. Probably of all animals, if not the most cunning in devices to evade its pursuers, it is the most adroit and pertinacious in flight. Not one hound in a hundred could cope with a "coon," in single combat on land, and it required three or four to do so in water. A coon hunt of several dogs (and it required a pack) gave chase, often a mile or more, before the quarry was compelled to a tree, and this, back and forth, winding right and left through the densest thickets that the fugitive knows best, on the margin of the creek. The tearing and soiling of clothes, inevitable to close following of hounds, made parents put a ban upon sons until they were well on toward manhood. Even grown persons, on account of the expense, seldom hunted them, except for the purpose of lessening their ravages upon the young corn ears, in

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adjoining fields, and never with intent to eat them. Occasionally a negro, for lack of opossum, would cook and eat them.

HUNTING THE OPOSSUM.

A sport which boys greatly delighted in was accompanying the negroes while hunting the opossum. Its relish was the dearer because of the infrequency with which parents, especially mothers, consented to it. Of all delights to the palate of the Southern negro, and indeed of many a Southern white man, the flesh of the opossum, when baked to the proper degree of brown, is the dearest. Southerners regard it of all meats the least indigestible, and but for its superabundant fat it would appear more frequently on the tables of whites. In some houses this superfluity was disposed of by placing a layer or more of oak or hickory sticks to the height of three or four inches at the bottom of the oven, and upon the lattice work thus made lay the opossum. By such mode much of the oil was deposited on the bottom. The negro, when cooking for himself, never resorts to these measures, but takes his favorite as he is, indeed, preferring him with all of his imperfections upon his head.

At every home, whatever might be lacking for making up the full of home comforts, it was never an opossum dog; seldom was it without two or three. They belonged to the negroes, and were usually well trained. The hunter providing himself with an ax,

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a torch of lightwood sticks of suitable length (about two feet) accompanied by at least one other, bearing another ax and an armful of other sticks, sallied forth to the woods. Both he and his dog well knew the most frequented haunts of the quarry, along skirts of wood and meadow where grew the persimmon, the muscadine and the wild grape. After the trail was found the pursuit was usually brief, as this beast is not swift of foot, and travels over an inconsiderable space. The dogs bark little or none while pursuing, and so the opossum, when about to be overtaken by surprise, makes with what speed is possible to a tree. In his emergency he has to sometimes take to a small sapling, up which he can mount no higher than six or eight feet without bending the top. If he is not too hotly pressed he will take to a larger one, although he is not as particular in that matter as the raccoon, who, being more swift of foot and more capable in general of taking care of himself, invariably seeks the largest he can find in his flight.

The "treeing" was announced by a bark peculiar to that office, and entirely different from others. There was no sound of eagerness, as in those in pursuit. It was one brief utterance of mere announcement, as if the dog had finished the task assigned to him and would now lie down and rest until his owners came up. If his bark was hearkened to he gave no more. If not, he repeated it at intervals until it was. Then he sat or lay while the tree was being felled. Just before this crisis, unless the tree was small, one

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of the axmen, quitting his work, repaired a short distance on the side opposite to that in which the tree was to fall, and held him by the collar during the descent. This was done to secure him from being crushed by rushing too speedily among the branches. Instant upon the fall he was loosed, and, rushing forward, seized his game nearly always before it could get to another tree. At that instant all excitement ended. A moment before the seizure, if he had it to spare, the opossum, offering no resistance, laid itself down and to all appearances died. This was regarded as an instinctive artifice to attempt escape from death by seeming to be dead already. It will fight neither man nor dog, and at last seems to implore for pity and sparing of life to one so entirely submissive. This gave rise to the phrase "playing 'possum," applied to persons suspected of making insincere ado about their own ailments or other suffering, or pretending to be asleep.

The way in which the captive was secured, if not novel, was curious, and singularly hard. A hickory stick of, say two inches thickness, and five or six feet in length, was split at a small distance from one end and before the wedge was withdrawn the long, hairless, thick-skinned tail was drawn about half its length through the slit, after which the wedge was withdrawn. The captor slung his stick across his shoulders, trimmed his torch, and, if not ready to return home, hied his dog to another search. Occasionally a negro would return home not too late for rest enough

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for the morrow's work, with three or four hanging to his pole.

The killing was usually postponed to a Sunday. During the interval it was kept in a box set with its open side upon the ground and made firm by heavy stones laid upon the top, ventilated by auger holes. It was fed upon persimmons mainly, but with additions of bread, collards, potatoes and other vegetables gotten from the negro's small garden that lay behind his cabin. It was really surprising what degrees of fatness it would take on in a very short time.

The killing was usually postponed to a Sunday. In all probability never since Georgia was first occupied by white people with slaves did an opossum, when killed by a negro, meet death in any other. For this time-honored custom he felt respect that would have been sorely hurt even by suggestion of substitution of another.

And so on a fair Sunday morning, taking him tenderly, yet with sufficient firmness of grasp by the tail, he drew him from his box into the light of day, let him "go dead" for awhile, after his harmlessly deceptive way, and, it may be, addressed to him some words of praise for the manner in which he had made himself ready for the winding up of this, his last job. Then laying down his ax with the helve across the victim's neck, and placing his foot upon it near the space of contact, while he kept it pressed, with his two hands he pulled his tail until his neck was broken. Already a pot of water hard by had been made hot for

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scalding the hair from his "carcass," by this time become, as some expressed it, "as round as a butter ball." After he was baked and set upon a tray, flanked satisfactorily with attendant good things, it was interesting to see the rapidity with which, using a favorite simile among the negroes, it would "go down the red lane."

PLANTATION FOURTH OF JULY.

Among the yearly holidays anticipated most eagerly by children was the plantation Fourth of July.

Independence Day, as many used to style it, always had its several commemorations. The principal one was held on the day itself in the villages, or, in districts too remote from those, in the meeting-house grove or near a cross roads store. In the latter case, an orator and a reader came from town, all surviving Revolutionary soldiers were carried and sat in chairs in front of the audience, and with women divided the eloquent praises of the peroration. Afterwards came the barbecue, for whose enjoyment juicy exhalations from pits wherein the "carcasses" were nearing a proper finish for some time before made all mouths ready.

The other came on later, usually on the third or fourth Sunday of the month. This was the negroes' "Fourth of July." By this time the small grain had been harvested, cotton and corn received their third and last plowing, and the crop was pronounced to be "laid by" during the four weeks before the ripening.

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On these occasions things were put on early and kept on late. Pigs and lambs, according to the number in the family, were barbecued, supplemented by fowls and vegetables, cakes, conserves and other good things. Yet the scene most interesting to children was the cider beating. Apples brought in carts from the orchard were emptied into a long trough made of a poplar log, where they were beaten by men with pestles. A rude press was built and fastened to one of the trees in the grove, and on a layer of oat straw the pulp gathered in buckets was emptied, the long beam, attached to the screw that pressed, being drawn around by a horse or mule. The fun to children was being allowed with long oat straws to suck the new cider from the trough. The dinner table was set in the grove. After the whites were served the negroes sat down on their chairs and benches, when all, men, women and children, did the best they knew how with the viands set before them. When all could do no more on that line, the old foreman, called upon for a speech and unanimously denied being excused, said his say, and was followed by others among the men, who talked their talks, and by the half-grown boys and girls, who sang their songs. After, the aged and other adults sat around under the trees and looked on as the young, white and black, disported in the grove. Except Christmas and Christmas week, this was the whitest of all days in the year. It mattered not what had been the favorableness of the seasons and the general prospect of the crops, on this day,

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conditions, whether promising or otherwise, were put out of mind. Everybody was conscious that he had done his part faithfully, and knew that the same was felt by everybody else, so all gave themselves to enjoyment, willing to leave the future to the disposal of the Creator. With apparent reluctance the sun went down at last too soon. Yet often the moon at or not far from its full, or the heavens lit by starlight, allowed the children to continue their sports till near the hour of nine, at which all must retire to their beds.

THE END.

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